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THE

AUTOBIOGRAPHY

OF

LEIGH HUNT,

WITH

REMINISCENCES

OF FRIENDS AND CONTEMPORARIES.

"Most men, when drawn to speak about themselves,
Are mov'dly little and little to say more
Than they intended, until at last they blush,
And can but hope to find secret excuse
In the self-knowledge of their auditors."

WALTER SCOTT'S *Old Play*.

20337

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CHAPTER XIX.

LORD BYRON IN ITALY—SHELLEY—PISA.

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As I am now about to re-enter into the history of my connection with Lord Byron, I will state in what spirit I mean to do it.

It is related of an Italian poet (Alamanni), that having in his younger days bitterly satirized the house of Austria, he found himself awkwardly situated in more advanced life, when being in exile, and employed by Francis the First, the king sent him on an embassy to the court of Charles the Fifth.

One of his sarcasms in particular had been very offensive. Alluding to the Austrian crest, the two-headed eagle, he had described the imperial house as a monstrous creature,

> Which bore two beaks, the better to devour.
> ("Che per più divorar, due becchi porta.")

Charles had treasured this passage in his mind; and when the ambassador, perhaps forgetting it altogether, or trusting to it's being forgotten, had terminated a fine oration, full of compliments to the power which he had so angrily painted, the Emperor, without making any other observation, calmly said,—

> "Which bore two beaks, the better to devour."

"Sir," said Alamanni, not hesitating, or betraying any confusion (which shows that he was either prepared for the rebuke, or was a man of great presence of mind), "when I wrote that passage, I spoke as a poet, to whom it is permitted to use fictions; but now I speak as an ambassador, who is bound to utter truth. I spoke then as a young man; but I now speak as a man advanced in years. I spoke as one who was agitated by grief and passion at the wretched condition of my country; but now I am calm, and free from passion." Charles rose from his seat, and laying his hand on the shoulder of the ambassador, said, in the kindest manner, that the loss of his country ought not to grieve him, since he had found such a patron in Francis; and that to an honest man every place was his country.

I would apply this anecdote to some things which I have formerly said of Lord Byron. I do not mean that I ever wrote any fictions about him. I wrote nothing which I did not feel to be true, or think so. But I can say with Alamanni, that I was then a young man, and that I am now advanced in years. I can say, that I was agitated by grief and anger, and that I am now free from anger. I can say, that I was far more alive to other people's defects than to my own, and that I am now sufficiently sensible of my own to show to others the charity which I need myself. I can say, moreover, that apart from a little allowance for provocation, I do not think it right to exhibit what is amiss, or may be thought amiss, in the character of a fellow-creature, out of any feeling but unmistakeable sorrow, or the wish to lessen evils which society itself may have caused.

Lord Byron, with respect to the points on which he erred and suffered (for on all others, a man like himself, poet and wit, could not but give and receive pleasure), was the victim of a bad bringing up, of a series of false positions in society, of evils arising from the mistakes of society itself, of a personal disadvantage (which his feelings exaggerated), nay, of his very advantages of person, and of a face so handsome as to render him an object of admiration. Even the lameness, of which he had such a resentment, only softened the admiration with tenderness.

But he did not begin life under good influences. He had a mother, herself, in all probability, the victim of bad training, who would fling the dishes from table at his head, and tell him he would be a scoundrel like his father. His father, who was cousin to the previous lord, had been what is called a man upon town, and was neither very rich nor respectable. The young lord, whose means had not yet recovered themselves, went to school, noble but poor, expected to be in the ascendant with his title, yet kept down by the inconsistency of his condition. He left school to put on the cap with the gold tuft, which is worshipped at college:—he left college to fall into some of the worst hands on the town:—his first productions were contemptuously criticised, and his genius thus provoked into satire:—his next were over-praised, which increased his self-love:—he married when his temper had been soured by difficulties, and his will and pleasure pampered by the sex:—and he went companionless into a foreign country, where all this perplexity could repose without being taught better, and where the sense of a lost popularity could be drowned in licence.

Should we not wonder that he retained so much of the grand and beautiful in his writings?—that the indestructible tendency of the poetical to the good should have struggled to so much purpose through faults and inconsistencies?—rather than quarrel with

his would-be misanthropy and his effeminate wailings? The worst things which he did were to gird resentfully at women, and to condescend to some other pettinesses of conduct which he persuaded himself were self-defences on his own part, and merited by his fellow-creatures. But he was never incapable of generosity: he was susceptible of the tenderest emotions; and though I doubt, from a certain proud and stormy look about the upper part of his face, whether his command of temper could ever have been quite relied on, yet I cannot help thinking, that had he been properly brought up, there would have been nobody capable of more lasting and loving attachments. The lower part of the face was a model of beauty.

I am sorry I ever wrote a syllable respecting Lord Byron which might have been spared. I have still to relate my connection with him, but it will be related in a different manner. Pride, it is said, will have a fall: and I must own, that on this subject I have experienced the truth of the saying. I had prided myself—I should pride myself now, if I had not been thus rebuked—on not being one of those who talk against others. I went counter to this feeling in a book; and to crown the absurdity of the contradiction, I was foolish enough to suppose, that the very fact of my so doing would show that I had done it in no other instance! that having been thus

public in the error, credit would be given me for never having been privately so! Such are the delusions inflicted on us by self-love. When the consequence was represented to me, as characterized by my enemies, I felt, enemies though they were, as if I blushed from head to foot. It is true, I had been goaded to the task by misrepresentations:—I had resisted every other species of temptation to do it:—and after all, I said more in his excuse, and less to his disadvantage, than many of those who reproved me. But enough. I owed the acknowledgment to him and to myself; and I shall proceed on my course with a sigh for both, and a trust in the goodwill of the sincere.

To return, then, to my arrival at Leghorn.

In the harbour of Leghorn, I found Mr. Trelawney, of the old Cornish family of that name, since known as the author of the *Younger Brother*. He was standing with his knight-errant aspect, dark, handsome, and mustachioed, in Lord Byron's boat, the *Bolivar*, of which he had taken charge for his lordship. In a day or two I went to see my noble acquaintance, who was in what the Italians call villeggiatura at Monte Nero; that is to say, enjoying a country-house for the season. I there became witness to a singular adventure, which seemed to make me free of Italy and stilettos, before I had well set foot in the country.

The day was very hot; the road to Monte Nero was very hot, through dusty suburbs; and when I got there, I found the hottest looking house I ever saw. It was salmon colour. Think of this, flaring over the country in a hot Italian sun!

But the greatest of all the heats was within. Upon seeing Lord Byron, I hardly knew him, he was grown so fat; and he was longer in recognising me, I had grown so thin. He took me into an inner room, and introduced me to Madame Guiccioli, then very young as well as handsome, who was in a state of great agitation. Her face was flushed, her eyes lit up, and her hair (which she wore in that fashion), streaming as if in disorder. The Conte Pietro, her brother, came in presently, also in a state of agitation, and having his arm in a sling. I then learned that a quarrel having taken place among the servants, the young Count had interfered, and been stabbed. He was very angry; Madame Guiccioli was more so, and could not admit the charitable comments of Lord Byron, who was for making light of the matter. They seemed to think the honour of their nation at stake. Indeed, there was a look in the business not a little formidable; for though the stab was not much, the inflictor of it threatened more, and was at that minute keeping watch outside, with the avowed intention of assaulting the first person that issued forth. I looked out of the window, and met his

eye glaring upwards like a tiger. He had a red cap or like a sans-culotte, and a most sinister aspect, dreary and meagre—that of a proper caitiff.

How long things had continued in this state I cannot say; but the hour was come when Lord Byron and his friend took their evening drive, and the thing was to be put an end to somehow. A servant had been despatched for the police, and was not returned.

At length we set out, the lady earnestly entreating his lordship to keep back, and all of us uniting to keep in advance of Conte Pietro, who was exasperated.

It was a curious moment for a stranger from England. I fancied myself pitched into one of the scenes in the *Mysteries of Udolpho.* Everything was new, foreign, and vehement. There was the lady, flushed and dishevelled, exclaiming against the "scelerato"; the young Count, wounded and threatening; and the assassin waiting for us with his knife. Nobody, however, could have put a better face on the matter than Lord Byron did,—composed, and endeavouring to compose: and as to myself, I was so occupied with the whole scene, that I had not time to be frightened. Forth we issue at the house door, all squeezing to have the honour of being first, when a termination is put to the tragedy by the man's throwing himself on a bench, extending his arms, and bursting into tears. His cap was half

over his eyes; his face gaunt, ugly, and unshaved; his appearance altogether more squalid and miserable, than an Englishman would conceive it possible to find in such an establishment. This blessed figure reclined weeping and wailing, and asking pardon for his offence; and to crown all, he requested Lord Byron to kiss him.

The noble lord conceived such an excess of charity superfluous. He pardoned him, but said he must not think of remaining in his service; upon which the man renewed his weeping and wailing, and continued kissing his hand. I was then struck with seeing the footing on which the gentry and their servants stand with each other in Italy, and the good-nature with which the strongest exhibitions of anger can be followed up. Conte Pietro, who was full of good qualities (for though he was here with his sister's lover, we must not judge of Italian customs by English), accepted the man's hand, and even shook it heartily; and Madame Guiccioli, though unable to subside so quickly from her state of indignant exaltation, looked in relenting sort, and speedily accorded him her grace also, seeing my lord had forgiven him. The man was all penitence and wailing, but he was obliged to quit. The police would have forced him, if he had not been dismissed. He left the country, and called in his way on Shelley, who was shocked at his appearance,

and gave him some money out of his very antipathy; for he thought nobody would help such an ill-looking fellow, if he did not.

'The unpleasant part of the business did not end here. It was, remotely, one of the causes of Lord Byron leaving Italy; for it increased the awkwardness of his position with the Tuscan government, and gave a farther unsteadiness to his proceedings. His friends, the Gambas, were already only upon sufferance in Tuscany. They had been obliged to quit their native country, Romagna, on account of their connection with the Carbonari; and Lord Byron, who had identified himself with their fortunes, became a party to their wanderings, and to the footing on which they stood wherever they were permitted to abide. The Grand Duke's government had given him to understand that they were at liberty to reside in Tuscany, provided they were discreet. A *fracas* which happened in the streets of Pisa, a little before I came, had given a shock to the tranquillity of this good understanding; the retinue of the Gambas having been the foremost persons concerned in it: and now, another of their men having caused a disturbance, the dilemma was completed. Lord Byron's residence in Tuscany was made uneasy to him. It was desired that he should separate himself from the Gambas: and though it was understood that a little courtesy on his part

towards the Grand Duke and Duchess, the latter of whom was said to be particularly desirous of seeing him at court, would have produced a *carte-blanche* for all parties, yet he chose to take neither of those steps; he therefore returned to his house at Pisa, only to reside there two or three months longer; after which he quitted the grand-ducal territory, and departed for Genoa.

I returned to Leghorn; and, taking leave of our vessel, we put up at an hotel. Mr. Shelley then came to us from his *villeggiatura* at Lerici. His town abode, as well as Lord Byron's, was at Pisa. I will not dwell upon the moment.

Leghorn is a polite Wapping, with a square and a theatre. The country around is uninteresting when you become acquainted with it; but to a stranger the realization of anything he has read about is a delight, especially of such things as vines hanging from trees, and the sight of Apennines. It is pleasant, too, to a lover of books, when at Leghorn, to think that Smollett once lived there; not, indeed, happily, for he was very ill, and besides living there, died there. But genius gives so much pleasure (and must also have received so much in the course of its life) that the memory of its troubles is overcome by its renown. Smollett once lived, as Lord Byron did, at Monte Nero; and he was buried in the Leghorn cemetery.

Mr. Shelley accompanied us from Leghorn to Pisa, in order to see us fixed in our new abode. Lord Byron left Monte Nero at the same time, and joined us. We occupied the ground-floor of his lordship's house, the Casa Lanfranchi, on the river Arno, which runs through the city. Divided tenancies of this kind are common in Italy, where few houses are in possession of one family. The families in this instance, as in others, remained distinct. The ladies at the respective heads of them never exchanged even a word. It was set to the account of their want of acquaintance with their respective languages; and the arrangement, I believe, which in every respect thus tacitly took place, was really, for many reasonable considerations, objected to by nobody.

The Casa Lanfranchi, which had been the mansion of the great Pisan family whose ancestors figure in Dante, is said to have been built by Michael Angelo, and is worthy of him. It is in a bold and broad style throughout, with those harmonious graces of proportion which are sure to be found in an Italian mansion. The outside is of rough marble. Lower down the river, on the same side of the way, is a mansion cased with polished marble. But I will speak of Pisa and its localities by-and-by.

We had not been in the house above an hour or

two, when my friend brought the celebrated surgeon, Vaccà, to see Mrs. Hunt. He had a pleasing intelligent face, and was the most gentlemanlike Italian I ever saw. Vaccà pronounced his patient to be in a decline; and little hope was given us by others that she would survive beyond the year. She is alive to this day, and Vaccà has been dead many years. I do not say this to his disparagement, for he was very skilful, and deserved his celebrity. But it appears to me, from more than one remarkable instance, that there is a superstition about what are called declines and consumptions, from which the most eminent of the profession are not free. I suspect, that people of this tendency, with a proper mode of living, may reach to as good a period of existence as any others. The great secret in this as in all other cases, and, indeed, in almost all moral as well as physical cases of ill, seems to be in diet and regimen. If some demi-god could regulate for mankind what they should eat and drink, and by what bodily treatment circulate their blood, he would put an end to half the trouble which the world undergo, some of the most romantic sorrows with which they flatter themselves not excepted.

The next day, while in the drawing-room with Lord Byron, I had a curious specimen of Italian manners. It was like a scene in an opera. One of his servants, a young man, suddenly came in

smiling, and was followed by his sister, a handsome brunette, in a bodice and sleeves, and her own hair. She advanced to his lordship to welcome him back to Pisa, and present him with a basket of flowers. In doing this, she took his hand and kissed it; then turned to the stranger, and kissed his hand also. I thought we ought to have struck up a quartett.

It is the custom in Italy, as it used to be in England, for inferiors to kiss your hand in coming and going. There is an air of good-will in it that is very agreeable, though the implied sense of inferiority is hardly so pleasant. Servants have a custom also of wishing you a "happy evening" (*felice sera*) when they bring in lights. To this you may respond in like manner; after which it seems impossible for the sun to "go down on the wrath," if there is any, of either party.

In a day or two Shelley took leave of us to return to Lerici for the rest of the season, meaning, however, to see us more than once in the interval. I spent one delightful afternoon with him, wandering about Pisa, and visiting the cathedral. On the night of the same day he took a post-chaise for Leghorn, intending next morning to sign his will in that city, and then depart with his friend Captain Williams for Lerici. I entreated him, if the weather was violent, not to give way to his daring spirit and venture to sea. He promised me he would not;

and it seems that he did set off later than he otherwise would have done, and apparently at a more favourable moment. I never beheld him more.

The superstitious might discern something strange in that connection of his last will and testament with his departure; but the will, it seems, was not to be found. The same night there was a tremendous storm of thunder and lightning, which made us very anxious; but we hoped our friend had arrived before then. When Trelawney came to Pisa, and told us he was missing, I underwent one of the sensations which we read of in books, but seldom experience: I was tongue-tied with horror.

A dreadful interval took place of more than a week, during which, every inquiry and every fond hope were exhausted. At the end of that period our worst fears were confirmed. A body had been washed on shore, near the town of Via Reggio, which, by the dress and stature, was known to be our friend's. Keats's last volume also (the *Lamia*, &c.), was found open in the jacket pocket. He had probably been reading it, when surprised by the storm. It was my copy. I had told him to keep it till he gave it me again with his own hands. So I would not have it from any other. It was burnt with his remains. The body of his friend Mr. Williams was found near a tower, four miles distant from its companion. That of the other third party in the boat, Charles Vivian,

the seaman, was not discovered till nearly three weeks afterwards.

The remains of Shelley and Mr. Williams were burnt after the good ancient fashion, and gathered into coffers. Those of Mr. Williams were subsequently taken to England. Shelley's were interred at Rome, in the Protestant burial-ground, the place which he had so touchingly described in recording its reception of Keats. The ceremony of the burning was alike beautiful and distressing. Trelawney, who had been the chief person concerned in ascertaining the fate of his friends, completed his kindness by taking the most active part on this last mournful occasion. He and his friend Captain Shenley were first upon the ground, attended by proper assistants. Lord Byron and myself arrived shortly afterwards. His lordship got out of his carriage, but wandered away from the spectacle, and did not see it. I remained inside the carriage, now looking on, now drawing back with feelings that were not to be witnessed.

None of the mourners, however, refused themselves the little comfort of supposing, that lovers of books and antiquity, like Shelley and his companion, Shelley in particular with his Greek enthusiasm, would not have been sorry to foresee this part of their fate. The mortal part of him, too, was saved from corruption; not the least extraordinary part of

his history. Among the materials for burning, as many of the gracefuller and more classical articles as could be procured—frankincense, wine, &c.—were not forgotten; and to these Keats's volume was added. The beauty of the flame arising from the funeral pile was extraordinary. The weather was beautifully fine. The Mediterranean, now soft and lucid, kissed the shore as if to make peace with it. The yellow sand and blue sky were intensely contrasted with one another: marble mountains touched the air with coolness; and the flame of the fire bore away towards heaven in vigorous amplitude, waving and quivering with a brightness of inconceivable beauty. It seemed as though it contained the glassy essence of vitality. You might have expected a seraphic countenance to look out of it, turning once more before it departed, to thank the friends that had done their duty.

Yet see how extremes can appear to meet even on occasions the most overwhelming; nay, even by reason of them; for as cold can perform the effect of fire, and burn us, so can despair put on the monstrous aspect of mirth. On returning from one of our visits to this sea-shore, we dined and drank; I mean, Lord Byron and myself;—dined little, and drank too much. Lord Byron had not shone that even in his cups, which usually brought out his best qualities. As to myself, I had bordered upon

emotions which I have never suffered myself to indulge, and which, foolishly as well as impatiently, render calamity, as somebody termed it, "an affront, and not a misfortune." The barouche drove rapidly through the forest of Pisa. We sang, we laughed, we shouted. I even felt a gaiety the more shocking, because it was real and a relief. What the coachman thought of us, God knows; but he helped to make up a ghastly trio. He was a good-tempered fellow, and an affectionate husband and father; yet he had the reputation of having offered his master to kill a man. I wish to have no such waking dream again. It was worthy of a German ballad.

Shelley, when he died, was in his thirtieth year. His figure was tall and slight, and his constitution consumptive. He was subject to violent spasmodic pains, which would sometimes force him to lie on the ground till they were over; but he had always a kind word to give to those about him, when his pangs allowed him to speak. In this organization, as well as in some other respects, he resembled the German poet, Schiller. Though well-turned, his shoulders were bent a little, owing to premature thought and trouble. The same causes had touched his hair with grey; and though his habits of temperance and exercise gave him a remarkable degree of strength, it is not supposed that he could have lived many years. He used to say that he had lived three times as

long as the calendar gave out; which he would prove, between jest and earnest, by some remarks on Time,

"That would have puzzled that stout Stagyrite."

Like the Stagyrite's, his voice was high and weak. His eyes were large and animated, with a dash of wildness in them; his face small, but well-shaped, particularly the mouth and chin, the turn of which was very sensitive and graceful. His complexion was naturally fair and delicate, with a colour in the cheeks. He had brown hair, which, though tinged with grey, surmounted his face well, being in considerable quantity, and tending to a curl. His side-face upon the whole was deficient in strength, and his features would not have told well in a bust; but when fronting and looking at you attentively, his aspect had a certain seraphical character that would have suited a portrait of John the Baptist, or the angel whom Milton describes as holding a reed "tipt with fire." Nor would the most religious mind, had it known him, have objected to the comparison; for, with all his scepticism, Shelley's disposition was truly said to have been anything but irreligious. A person of much eminence for piety in our times has well observed, that the greatest want of religious feeling is not to be found among the greatest infidels, but among those who never think of religion except as a matter of course. The leading feature of Shelley's character may be said to have been a

natural piety. He was pious towards nature, towards his friends, towards the whole human race, towards the meanest insect of the forest. He did himself an injustice with the public, in using the popular name of the Supreme Being inconsiderately. He identified it solely with the most vulgar and tyrannical notions of a God made after the worst human fashion; and did not sufficiently reflect, that it was often used by a juster devotion to express a sense of the great Mover of the universe. An impatience in contradicting worldly and pernicious notions of a supernatural power, led his own aspirations to be misconstrued; for though, in the severity of his dialectics, and particularly in moments of despondency, he sometimes appeared to be hopeless of what he most desired—and though he justly thought that a Divine Being would prefer the increase of benevolence and good before any praise, or even recognition of himself (a reflection worth thinking of by the intolerant), yet there was in reality no belief to which he clung with more fondness than that of some great pervading "Spirit of Intellectual Beauty;" as may be seen in his aspirations on that subject. He assented warmly to an opinion which I expressed in the cathedral at Pisa, while the organ was playing, that a truly divine religion might yet be established, if charity were really made the principle of it, instead of faith.

Music affected him deeply. He had also a delicate perception of the beauties of sculpture. It is not one of the least evidences of his conscientious turn of mind, that, with the inclination and the power to surround himself in Italy with all the graces of life, he made no sort of attempt that way; finding other use for his money, and not always satisfied with himself for indulging even in the luxury of a boat. When he bought elegancies of any kind, it was to give away. Boating was his great amusement. He loved the mixture of action and repose which he found in it; and delighted to fancy himself gliding away to Utopian isles, and bowers of enchantment. But he would give up any pleasure to do a deed of kindness. Indeed, he may be said to have made the whole comfort of his life a sacrifice to what he thought the wants of society.

Temperament and early circumstances conspired to make him a reformer, at a time of life when few begin to think for themselves; and it was his misfortune, as far as immediate reputation was concerned, that he was thrown upon society with a precipitancy and vehemence, which rather startled them with fear for themselves, than allowed them to become sensible of the love and zeal that impelled him. He was like a spirit that had darted out of its orb, and found itself in another world. I used to tell him that he had come from the planet Mercury. When I heard

of the catastrophe that overtook him, it seemed as if this spirit, not sufficiently constituted like the rest of the world, to obtain their sympathy, yet gifted with a double portion of love for all living things, had been found dead in a solitary corner of the earth, its wings stiffened, its warm heart cold; the relics of a misunderstood nature, slain by the ungenial elements.

We remained but three months at Pisa subsequently to this calamitous event. We then went to Genoa, where we received the first number of the periodical work, the *Liberal*, which Lord Byron had invited me to set up, and in which Shelley was to have assisted. He did assist; for his beautiful translation of the *May Day Night*, from Goethe, appeared in the first number.

But more of this publication when I come to Genoa. I will first say a few words respecting the way in which we passed our time at Pisa, and then speak of the city itself and its highly interesting features, which are not so well known as they should be.

Our manner of life was this. Lord Byron, who used to sit up at night, writing *Don Juan* (which he did under the influence of gin and water), rose late in the morning. He breakfasted; read; lounged about, singing an air, generally out of Rossini; then took a bath, and was dressed; and coming down-

stairs, was heard, still singing, in the court-yard, out of which the garden ascended, by a few steps, at the back of the house. The servants, at the same time, brought out two or three chairs. My study, a little room in a corner, with an orange-tree at the window, looked upon this court-yard. I was generally at my writing when he came down, and either acknowledged his presence by getting up and saying something from the window, or he called out "Leontius!" (a name into which Shelley had pleasantly converted that of "Leigh Hunt") and came up to the window with some jest, or other challenge to conversation. His dress, as at Monte Nero, was a nankin jacket, with white waistcoat and trousers, and a cap, either velvet or linen, with a shade to it. In his hand was a tobacco-box, from which he helped himself occasionally to what he thought a preservative from getting too fat. Perhaps also he supposed it good for the teeth. We then lounged about, or sat and talked, Madame Guiccioli with her sleek tresses descending after her toilet to join us. The garden was small and square, but plentifully stocked with oranges and other shrubs; and, being well watered, it looked very green and refreshing under the Italian sky. The lady generally attracted us up into it, if we had not been there before. Her appearance might have reminded an English spectator of Chaucer's heroine—

"Yclothed was she, fresh for to devise.
Her yellow air was braided in a tress
Behind her back, a yarde long, I guess:
And in the garden (as the sun uprist)
She walketh up and down, where as her list:"

And then, as Dryden has it:—

"At every turn she made a little stand,
And thrust among the thorns her lily hand."

Madame Guiccioli, who was at that time about twenty, was handsome and lady-like, with an agreeable manner, and a voice not partaking too much of the Italian fervour to be gentle. She had just enough of it to give her speaking a grace. None of her graces appeared entirely free from art; nor, on the other hand, did they betray enough of it to give you an ill opinion of her sincerity and good-humour. I was told, that her Romagnese dialect was observable; but to me, at that time, all Italian in a lady's mouth was Tuscan pearl; and she trolled it over her lip, pure or not, with that sort of conscious grace, which seems to belong to the Italian language as a matter of right. I amused her with speaking bad Italian out of Ariosto, and saying *speme* for *speranza;* in which she good-naturedly found something pleasant and *pellegrino;* keeping all the while that considerate countenance, for which a foreigner has so much reason to be grateful. Her hair was what the poet has described, or rather *blond*, with an inclination to yellow; a very fair and delicate yellow

at all events, and within the limits of the poetical. She had regular features, of the order properly called handsome, in distinction to prettiness or to piquancy; being well proportioned to one another, large rather than otherwise, but without coarseness, and more harmonious than interesting. Her nose was the handsomest of the kind I ever saw; and I have known her both smile very sweetly, and look intelligently, when Lord Byron has said something kind to her.

In the evening we sometimes rode or drove out, generally into the country. The city I first walked through in company with Shelley, but speedily, alas! explored it by myself, or with my children. The state of my wife's health would not suffer her to quit her apartment.

Let the reader imagine a small white city, with a tower leaning at one end of it, trees on either side, and blue mountains for the background; and he may fancy he sees Pisa, as the traveller sees it in coming from Leghorn. Add to this, in summer-time, fields of corn on all sides, bordered with hedge-row trees, and the festoons of vines, of which he has so often read, hanging from tree to tree; and he may judge of the impression made upon an admirer of Italy, who is in Tuscany for the first time.

In entering the city, the impression is not injured. What looked white in the distance, remains as pure

and fair on closer acquaintance. You cross a bridge, and cast your eye up the whole extent of the city one way, the river Arno (the river of Dante, Petrarch, and Boccaccio) winding through the middle of it under two more bridges; and fair elegant houses of good size bordering the wide pavement on either side. This is the Lung'arno, or street "Along the Arno." The mountains, in which you fancy you see the marble veins (for it is from these that the marble of Carrara comes), tower away beautifully at the further end, and, owing to the clear atmosphere, seem to be much nearer than they are. The Arno, which is about as wide perhaps as the Isis at Oxford, is sandy coloured, and in the summer-time shrunken; but still it is the river of the great Tuscan writers, the visible possessor of the name we have all heard a thousand times; and we feel what a true thing is that which is called ideal.

The first novelty that strikes you, after your dreams and matter-of-fact have recovered from the surprise of their introduction to one another, is the singular fairness and new look of houses that have been standing hundreds of years. This is owing to the dryness of the Italian atmosphere. Antiquity refuses to look ancient in Italy. It insists upon retaining its youthfulness of aspect. The consequence at first is a mixed feeling of admiration and disappointment; for we miss the venerable. The

houses seem as if they ought to have sympathized more with humanity, and were as cold and as hard-hearted as their materials. But you discover that Italy is the land, not of the venerable, but the beautiful; and cease to look for old age in the chosen country of the Apollo and the Venus. The only real antiquities are those in Dante and the oldest painters, who treat of the Bible in an ancient style. Among the mansions on the Lung'arno is one entirely fronted with marble, and marble so pure and smooth that you can see your face in it. It is in a most graceful style of architecture; and over the door has a mysterious motto and symbol. The symbol is an actual fetter, attached with great nicety to the middle stone over the door-way: the motto, *Alla Giornata* (For the Day, or the Day's Work). The allusion is supposed to be to some captivity undergone by one of the Lanfreducci family, the proprietors: but nobody knows. Further up on the same side of the way, is the old ducal palace, said to be the scene of the murder of Don Garcia by his father, which is the subject of one of Alfieri's tragedies: and between both, a little before you come to the old palace, is the mansion before mentioned, in which he resided, and which still belongs to the family of the Lanfranchi, formerly one of the most powerful in Pisa. They were among the nobles who conspired against the ascendency of Count

Ugolino, and who were said, but not truly, to have wreaked that revenge on him and his children, recorded without a due knowledge of the circumstances by Dante. The tower in which Ugolino perished was subsequently called the Tower of Famine. Chaucer, who is supposed to have been in Italy, says that it stood "a littel out" of Pisa; Villani says, in the Piazza of the Anziani. It is understood to be no longer in existence, and even its site is disputed.

It is curious to feel oneself sitting quietly in one of the old Italian houses, and think of all the passions that have agitated the hearts of so many generations of its tenants; all the revels and the quarrels that have echoed along its walls; all the guitars that have tinkled under its windows; all the scuffles that have disputed its doors. Along the great halls, how many feet have hurried in alarm! how many stately beauties have drawn their trains! how many torches have ushered magnificence up the staircases! how much blood perhaps been shed! The ground-floors of all the great houses in Pisa, as in other Italian cities, have iron bars at the windows. They were for security in time of trouble. The look is at first very gloomy and prison-like, but you get used to it. The bars also are thin, round, and painted white, and the interstices are large; and if the windows look towards a garden, and are bordered

with shrubs and ivy, as those at the back were in the Casa Lanfranchi, the imagination makes a compromise with their prison-like appearance, and persuades itself they are but comforts in times of war, and trellises during a peace-establishment. All the floors are made for separate families, it having been the custom in Italy from time immemorial for fathers and mothers, sons and daughters-in-law, or *vice versa*, with as many other relations as might be "agreeable," to live under the same roof. Spaciousness and utility were the great objects with the builder; and a stranger is sometimes surprised with the look of the finest houses outside, particularly that of the ground-floor. The stables used often to be there, and their place is now as often occupied by shops. In the inside of the great private houses there is always a certain majestic amplitude; but the entrances of the rooms, and the staircase on the ground floor, are often placed irregularly, so as to sacrifice everything to convenience. In the details there is sure to be a noble eye to proportion. You cannot look at the elevation of the commonest door-way, or the ceiling of a room appropriated to the humblest purposes, but you recognise the land of the fine arts. You think Michael Angelo has been at the turning of those arches,—at the harmonizing of those beautiful varieties of shade, which by the secret principles common to all arts and sciences, affect the.

mind like a sort of inaudible music. The very plasterer who is hired to give the bare walls of some old disused apartment an appearance of ornament, paints his door-ways, his pilasters, and his borders of leaves, in a bold style of relief and illusion, which would astonish the doubtful hand of many an English student "in the higher walks of art." It must be observed, however, that this is a piece of good taste which seems to have survived most others, and to have been kept up by the objects on which it works; for the arts are at present lying fallow in Italy, waiting for better times.

I was so taken up, on my arrival at Pisa, with friends and their better novelties, that I forgot even to look about me for the Leaning Tower. You lose sight of it on entering the town, unless you come in at the Lucca gate. On the Sunday following, however, I went to see it, and the spot where it stands in illustrious company. Forsythe, a late traveller of much shrewdness and pith (though a want of ear, and an affectation of ultra good sense, rendered him in some respects extremely unfit for a critic on Italy, —as when he puts music and perfumery on a level!) had been beforehand with the spot in putting this idea in my head. "Pisa," says he, "while the capital of a republic, was celebrated for its profusion of marble, its patrician towers, and its grave magnificence. It still can boast some marble churches, a

marble palace, and a marble bridge. Its towers, though no longer a mark of nobility, may be traced in the walls of modernized houses. Its gravity pervades every street; but its magnificence is now confined to one sacred corner. There stands the Cathedral, the Baptistery, the Leaning Tower, and the Campo Santo; all built of the same marble, all varieties of the same architecture, all venerable with years, and fortunate both in their society and in their solitude."

I know not whether my first sensation at the sight of the Leaning Tower, was admiration of its extreme beauty, or astonishment at its posture. Its beauty has never been sufficiently praised. Its overhanging seems to menace the houses beneath it with destruction. The inclination is fourteen feet out of the perpendicular. We are amazed that people should build houses underneath it, till we recollect that it has probably stood thus ever since it was built, that is to say, for nearly six hundred and fifty years; and that habit reconciles us to anything. "The Leaning Tower at first sight," says Mr. Matthews, in his Diary of an Invalid, "is quite terrific, and exceeds expectation. There is, I believe, no doubt of the real history of this tower. The foundation-ground gave way during the progress of the building, and the architect completed his work in the direction thus accidentally given to it. Accordingly, we find

in the construction of the upper part, that the weight is supported in a way to support the equilibrium." He means, that something of a curve backwards is given to it. Mr. Forsythe seems to ridicule opinions to this effect; but I can only say, that such was the impression on my own eyes, before I called to mind anything that had been said about it. The structure was begun by a German artist, William of Inspruck, and finished by Italians. Several other towers in Pisa, including the observatory, have a manifest inclination, owing to the same cause,—the sinking of the soil, which is light, sandy, and full of springs; and surely nothing is more probable than an attempt on the part of the builders of so beautiful a structure to counteract the consequences of the foundation having given way. The tower is a campanile, or belfry, to the cathedral. It was the custom in Italy to make the belfry a separate building, and the custom was a good one; for it afforded variety, and prevented the barbarism of steeples. The height of the tower is about 150 feet, but it looks more, on account of its happy situation, and the lowness of the houses near it. Let the reader imagine the Monument of London sheathed in an open work of eight stories of little columns, and leaning in a fine open situation, and he will have some idea of this noble cylinder of marble. The sheath is its great beauty, and gives

it an extraordinary aspect of richness and simplicity.

With regard to the company in which it stands, let the reader imagine a broad grass-walk, standing in the solitary part of a country town. Let him suppose at one end of this walk the Leaning Tower, with a row of small but elegant houses right under the inclination, and looking down the grass-plot; the baptistery, a rotunda, standing by itself at the opposite end; the public hospital, an extremely neat and quiet building, occupying the principal length of the road which borders the grass plot on one side; on the other side, and on the grass itself, the cathedral, stretching between the Leaning Tower and the baptistery; and lastly, at the back of the cathedral, and visible between the openings at its two ends, the Campo Santo (Holy Field) or burial-ground, walled in with marble cloisters full of the oldest paintings in Italy. All these buildings are detached; they all stand in a free, open situation; they all look as if they were built but a year ago; they are all of marble; the whole place is kept extremely clean,—the very grass in a state of greenness not common to turf in the south; and there are trees looking upon it over a wall next the baptistery. Let the reader add to this scene a few boys playing about, all ready to answer your questions in pure Tuscan,—women occasionally passing with veils or bare heads, or now

and then a couple of friars; and though finer individual sights may be found in the world, it will be difficult to come upon an assemblage of objects more rich in their combination.

The baptistery is a large rotunda, richly carved, and appropriated solely to the purpose after which it was christened. It is in a mixed style, and was built in the twelfth century. Forsyth, who is deep in arches and polygons, objects to the crowd of unnecessary columns; to the "hideous tunnel which conceals the fine swell of the cupola;" and to the appropriation of so large an edifice to a christening. The "tunnel" may deserve his wrath; but his architectural learning sometimes behaves as ill as the tunnel. It obscures his better taste. A christening, in the eyes of a good Catholic, is at least as important an object as a rotunda; and there is a religious sentiment in the profusion with which ornament is heaped upon edifices of this nature. It forms a beauty of itself, and gives even mediocrity a sort of abundance of intention that looks like the wealth of genius. The materials take leave of their materiality, and crowd together into a worship of their own. It is no longer "let everything" only "that has *breath* praise the Lord;" but let everything else praise him, and take a meaning and life accordingly. Let column obscure column, as in a multitude of men; let arch strain upon arch, as if to ascend to heaven; let there be

infinite details, conglomerations, mysteries, lights, darknesses; and let the birth of a new soul be celebrated in the midst of all.

The cathedral is in the Greek style of the middle ages, a style which this writer thinks should rather be called the Lombard, "as it appeared in Italy first under the Lombard princes." He says, that it includes "whatever was grand or beautiful in the works of the middle ages;" and that "this was perhaps the noblest of them all." He proceeds to find fault with certain incongruities, amongst which are some remains of Pagan sculpture left standing in a Christian church; but he enthusiastically admires the pillars of oriental granite that support the roof. The outside of the building consists of mere heaps of marble, mounting by huge steps to the roof; but their simplicity as well as size gives them a new sort of grandeur; and Mr. Forsyth has overlooked the extraordinary sculpture of the bronze doors, worthy of the same hand that made those others at Florence, which Michael Angelo said were fit to be the gates of Paradise. It is divided into compartments, the subjects of which are taken from Scripture. The relief is the most graceful and masterly conceivable; the perspective astonishing, as if in drawing; and equal justice is done to the sharp monstrosities of the devil with his bat-wings, and to the gentle graces of Jesus. There is a great number of pictures in the

cathedral, good enough to assist rather than spoil the effect, but not remarkable. I never was present when the church-service was at its best; but the leader did not seem to rely much on his singers, by the noise which he made in beating time. His vehement roll of paper sounded like the lashing of a whip.

One evening, in August, I saw the whole inside of the cathedral lit up with wax in honour of the Assumption. The lights were disposed with much taste, but produced a great heat. There was a gigantic picture of the Virgin displayed at the upper end, who was to be supposed sitting in heaven, surrounded with the celestial ardours; but she was "dark with excess of bright." It is impossible to see this profusion of lights, especially when one knows their symbolical meaning, without being struck with the source from which Dante took his idea of the beatified spirits. His heaven, filled with lights, and lights too, arranged in figures, which glow with lustre in proportion to the beatitude of the souls within them, is the sublimation of a Catholic church. And so far it is heavenly indeed, for nothing escapes the look of materiality like fire. It is so airy, joyous, and divine a thing, when separated from the idea of pain and an ill purpose, that the language of happiness naturally adopts its terms, and can tell of nothing more rapturous than burning bosoms and sparkling

eyes. The Seraph of the Hebrew theology was a fire. But then the materials of heaven and hell are the same? Yes; and a very fine piece of moral theology might be made out of their sameness, always omitting the brute injustice of eternal punishment. Is it not by our greater or less cultivation of health and benevolence, that we all make out our hells and heavens upon earth? by a turning of the same materials and passions of which we are all composed to different accounts? burning now in the horrors of hell with fear, hatred, and uncharitableness, and now in the joys, or at least the happiest sympathies of heaven, with good effort and courage, with gratitude, generosity, and love?

The crowning glory of Pisa is the Campo Santo. I entered for the first time at twilight, when the indistinct shapes, colours, and antiquity of the old paintings wonderfully harmonized with the nature of the place. I chose to go towards evening, when I saw it again; and though the sunset came upon me too fast to allow me to see all the pictures as minutely as I could have wished, I saw enough to warrant my giving an opinion of them; and I again had the pleasure of standing in the spot at twilight. It is an oblong enclosure, about the size of Stratford Place, and surrounded with cloisters wider and lighter than those of Westminster. At least, such was my impression. The middle is grassed earth, the surface

of which, for some depth, is said to have been brought from Palestine at the time of the crusades, and to possess the virtue of decomposing bodies in the course of a few hours. The tradition is, that Ubaldo Lanfranchi, Archbishop of Pisa, who commanded the forces contributed by his countrymen, brought the earth away with him in his ships; but though such a proceeding would not have been impossible, the story is now, I believe, regarded as a mere legend. The decomposition of the bodies might have been effected by other means. Persons are buried both in this enclosure and in the cloisters, but only persons of rank or celebrity. Most of the inscriptions for instance (of which there are some hundreds, all on marble, and mixed with busts and figures), are to the memory of Pisans in the rank of nobility; but there are several also to artists and men of letters. The most interesting grave is that of Benozzo, one of the old painters, who lies at the foot of his own works. Here is a handsome monument, with a profile, to Algarotti, erected by Frederick of Prussia. Pignotti, the fabulist, has another; and Fabroni, a late good-natured critic and bishop, has a bust so characteristic, and full of a certain jolly gusto, that we long to have eaten maccaroni with him. In truth, these modern gettings up of renown, in the shape of busts and monuments to middling men of talent, appear misplaced, when you come to

notice them. They look in the way. But the old pictures, which they seem to contradict and interfere with, reconcile them at last. Anything and everything mortal has its business here. The pretensions of mediocrity are exalted into the claims of the human being. One blushes to deny to the writers of amiable books what one would demand for one's own common nature; or to think of excluding a man for doing better than hundreds of the people there, merely because he has not done so well as some who are not there. Pignotti and Algarotti even harmonize with some sprightly figures who play their harps and their love-songs in the pictures, and who flourished hundreds of years ago, as their readers flourish now; and the bustling and well-fed amenity of Monsignor Fabroni is but a temporary contradiction, which will be rendered serious some day by the crumbling away of his cheeks, or the loss of some over-lively feature. Let him, for Heaven's sake, "live in inscription," and "look *treats* in stone."

Besides these modern pieces of sculpture, there is a collection of ancient marbles, chiefly urns and sarcophagi, together with some fragments of the early Italian school. It is so impossible to pay proper attention to any large collection of art, without repeated visits, that I do not pretend to have given it to the old pictures, much less to the marbles. The first impression is not pleasant. Their orderly

array, the numerals upon them, and the names of the donors upon the walls behind, give the whole too much the air of a shew-room or common gallery. The pictures form part of the sentiment of the place as a burial-ground, and would be better by themselves; but the antiquity of the marbles reconciles the addition. From the glance I took at them, many appear to be poor enough, but several very good. I noticed in particular, one or two sarcophagi with reliefs of Bacchus and Ariadne, and a head supposed to be of a Roman emperor, very brutal. As to the Paganism, I do not quarrel, like Mr. Forsyth, with the presence of things Pagan in a Christian edifice; not only because the Pagan and Catholic religions have much that is in common, their draperies, altars, incense, music, winged genii, &c.; but because there is an identity of interests and aspirations in all these struggles of mortal man after a knowledge of things supernatural.

The paintings on the walls, the great glory of Pisa, are by Orgagna, Simon Memmi, Giotto, Buffalmacco, Benozzo, and others—all more or less renowned by illustrious pens; all, with more or less gusto, the true and reverend harbingers of the greatest painters of Italy. Simon Memmi is the artist celebrated by Petrarch for his portrait of Laura; Buffalmacco is the mad wag (grave enough here) who cuts such a figure in the old Italian novels;

and Giotto, the greatest of them all, is the friend of Dante, the hander down of his likeness to posterity, and himself the Dante of his art, without the drawbacks of satire and sorrow. His works have the same real character, the same imaginative mixture of things familiar with things unearthly, the same strenuous and (when they choose) gentle expression,—in short, the same true discernment of the "differences of things," now grappling with a fiend or a fierce thought, now sympathising with fear and sorrow, now setting hard the teeth of grim warriors, now dissolving in the looks and flowing tresses of women, or putting a young gallant in an attitude to which Raphael might have traced his cavaliers. And this is more or less the character of the very oldest pictures in the Campo Santo. They have the germs of beauty and greatness, however obscured and stiffened; the struggle of true pictorial feeling with the inexperience of art. As you proceed along the walls, you see gracefulness and knowledge gradually helping one another, and legs and arms, lights, shades, and details of all sorts taking their proper measures and positions, as if every separate thing in the world of painting had been created with repeated efforts, till it answered the fair idea. They are like a dream of humanity during the twilight of creation.

I have already mentioned that the pictures are painted on the walls of the four cloisters. They

occupy the greater part of the elevation of these walls, beginning at top and finishing at a reasonable distance from the pavement. The subjects are from the Old Testament up to the time of Solomon, from the legends of the middle ages, particularly St. Ranieri (the patron saint of Pisa) and from the history of the Crucifixion, Resurrection, &c., with the Day of Judgment. There is also a Triumph of Death. The colours of some of them, especially of the sky and ship in the voyage of St. Ranieri, are wonderfully preserved. The sky looks as blue as the finest out of doors. But others are much injured by the sea air, which blows into Pisa; and it is a pity that the windows of the cloisters in these quarters are not glazed, to protect them from further injury. The best idea, perhaps, which I can give an Englishman of the general character of the paintings, is by referring him to the engravings of Albert Durer, and the serious parts of Chaucer. There is the same want of proper costume—the same intense feeling of the human being, both in body and soul—the same bookish, romantic, and retired character—the same evidences, in short, of antiquity and commencement, weak (where it is weak) for want of a settled art and language, but strong for that very reason in first impulses, and in putting down all that is felt. An old poet, however, always has the advantage of an old painter, because he is not bound to a visible

exhibition of arms, legs, and attitudes, and thus escapes the artistical defects of the time. But they truly illustrate one another. Chaucer's Duke Theseus, clothed and behaving accordingly—his yawning courtiers, who thank King Cambuscan for dismissing them to bed—his god Janus keeping Christmas with his fireside and his dish of brawn, &c.—exhibit the same fantastic mixtures of violated costume and truth of nature. The way in which the great old poet mingles together personages of all times, nations, and religions, real and fictitious, Samson and Turnus with Socrates, Ovid with St. Augustin, &c. and his descriptions of actual "purtreyings on a wall," in which are exhibited, in one and the same scene, Narcissus, Solomon, Venus, Crœsus, and "the porter Idleness," resemble the manner in which some of the pictures in the Campo Santo defy all perspective, and fill one picture with twenty different solitudes. There is a painting for instance devoted to the celebrated anchorites, or hermits of the desert. They are represented according to their several legends—reading, dying, undergoing temptations, assisted by lions, &c. At first they all look like fantastic actors in the same piece; but you dream, and are reconciled.

The contempt of everything like interval, and of all which may have happened in it, makes the ordinary events of life seem of as little moment; and the mind

is exclusively occupied with the sacred old men and their solitudes, all at the same time, and yet each by himself. The manner in which some of the hoary saints in these pictures pore over their books and carry their decrepit old age, full of a bent and absorbed feebleness—the set limbs of the warriors on horseback—the sidelong unequivocal looks of some of the ladies playing on harps, and conscious of their ornaments—the people of fashion, seated in rows, with Time coming up unawares to destroy them—the other rows of elders and doctors of the church, forming part of the array of heaven—the uplifted hand of Christ denouncing the wicked at the Day of Judgment—the daring satires occasionally introduced against monks and nuns—the profusion of attitudes, expressions, incidents, broad draperies, ornaments of all sorts, visions, mountains, ghastly-looking cities, fiends, angels, sybilline old women, dancers, virgin brides, mothers and children, princes, patriarchs, dying saints;—it would be a simply blind injustice to the superabundance and truth of conception in all this multitude of imagery, not to recognise the real inspirers as well as harbingers of Raphael and Michael Angelo, instead of confining the honour to the Masaccios and Peruginos. The Masaccios and Peruginos, for all that ever I saw, meritorious as they are, are no more to be compared with them, than the sonnetteers of Henry the

Eighth's time are to be compared with Chaucer. Even in the very rudest of the pictures, where the souls of the dying are going out of their mouths in the shape of little children, there are passages not unworthy of Dante or Michael Angelo — angels trembling at the blowing of trumpets; men in vain attempting to carry their friends into heaven; and saints, who have lived ages of temperance, sitting in calm air upon hills far above the progress of Death, who goes bearing down the great, the luxurious, and the young. The picture by Titian (or Giorgione), in which he has represented the three great stages of existence, bubble-blowing childhood, love-making manhood, and death-contemplating old age, is not better conceived, and hardly better made out, than some of the designs of Orgagna and Giotto.

Since I have beheld the Campo Santo, I have enriched my day-dreams and my stock of the admirable, and am thankful that I have names by heart, to which I owe homage and gratitude. Giotto, be thou one to me hereafter, of a kindred brevity, solidity, and stateliness, with that of thy friend Dante, and far happier! Tender and noble Orgagna, be thou blessed for ever beyond the happiness of thine own heaven!

The air of Pisa is soft and balmy to the last degree. Forsyth thinks it too moist; and countenance is given to his opinion by the lowness and

flatness of the place, which lies in a plain full of springs and rivers, between the Apennines and the sea. The inhabitants have a proverb,—*Pisa pesa a chi posa*;—which may be translated

Pisa sits ill
On those who sit still.

To me the air seemed as dry as it is soft; and most people will feel oppressed everywhere, if they do not take exercise. The lower rooms of the houses are reckoned, however, too damp in winter, at least on the Lungarno; though the winter season is counted delicious, and the Grand Duke goes there to spend two months of it. The noon-day sun in summer-time is formidable, resembling more the heat struck from burning metal, than anything we conceive of noon in England. But a sea-breeze often blows of an evening, when the inhabitants take their exercise.

A look out upon the Lungarno at noon is curious. A blue sky is overhead—dazzling stone underneath—the yellow Arno gliding along, generally with nothing upon it, sometimes a lazy sail; the houses on the opposite side with their green blinds down appear to be asleep; and nobody passes but a few labourers, carmen, or countrywomen in their veils and handkerchiefs, hastening with bare feet, but never too fast to lose a certain air of strut and stateliness. Dante, in one of his love poems, praises his mistress for walking

like a peacock; nay, even like a crane, *straight above herself:*—

> "Soave a guisa va di un bel pavone,
> Diritta sopra se, coma una grua."
>
> Sweetly she goes, like the bright peacock; straight
> Above herself, like to the lady crane.

This is the common walk of Italian women, rich and poor. To an English eye, at first it seems wanting in a certain modesty and moral grace; but you see what the grave poet thinks of it, and it is not associated in an Italian mind with any such deficiency. That it has a beauty of its own is certain.

Solitary as Pisa may look at noon, it is only by comparison with what you find in very populous cities. Its desolate aspect is much exaggerated. The people, for the most part, sit in shade at their doors in the hottest weather, so that it cannot look so solitary as many parts of London at the same time of the year; and though it is true that grass grows in some of the streets, it is only in the remotest. The streets, for the most part, are kept very neat and clean, not excepting the poorest alleys; a benefit arising not only from the fine pavement which is everywhere to be found, but from the wise use to which criminals are put. The punishment of death, I believe, is not kept up in Tuscany. Robbers, and even murderers, are made to atone for the ill they have done by the good works of sweeping and keeping clean. A great mur-

derer on the English stage used formerly to be dressed in a suit of brick-dust. In Tuscany, or at least in Pisa, robbers condemned to this punishment are clothed in a red livery, and murderers in a yellow. A stranger looks with a feeling more grave than curiosity at these saffron-coloured anomalies, quietly doing their duty in the streets, and not seeming to avoid observation. But, in fact, they look just like other men. They are either too healthy by temperance and exercise to exhibit a conscience, or think they make up by their labour for so trifling an ebullition of animal spirits. And they have a good deal to say for themselves, considering that circumstances modify all men, and that the labour is in chains and for life.

The inhabitants of Pisa, in general, are not reckoned a favourable specimen of Tuscan looks. You are sure to meet fine faces in any large assembly, but the common run is bad enough. They are hard, prematurely aged, and what expression there is, is worldly. Some of them have no expression whatever, but are as destitute of speculation and feeling as masks. The bad Italian face and the good Italian face are the extremes of insensibility and the reverse. But it is rare that the eyes are not fine; and the females have a profusion of good hair. Lady Morgan has remarked the promising countenances of Italian children, compared with what they turn out to be as

they grow older; and she adds, with equal justice, that it is an evident affair of government and education. You doubly pity the corruptions of a people who, besides their natural genius, preserve in the very midst of their sophistication a frankness distinct from it, and an entire freedom from affectation. An Italian annoys you neither with his pride like an Englishman, nor with his vanity like a Frenchman. He is quiet and natural, self-possessed without wrapping himself up in a corner, and ready for cheerfulness without grimace. His frankness sometimes takes the air of a simplicity, at once misplaced and touching. A young man, who exhibited a taste for all good and generous sentiments, and who, according to the representation of his friends, was a very worthy as well as ingenious person, did not scruple to tell me one day, as a matter of course, that he made a point of getting acquainted with rich families, purely to be invited to their houses and partake of their good things. Many an Englishman would do this, but he would hardly be so frank about it to a stranger; nor would an Englishman of the same tastes in other respects be easily found to act so. But it is the old story of "following the multitude to do evil," and is no doubt accounted a matter of necessity and common sense.

The Pisans claim the merit of speaking as pure Italian, if not purer, as any people in Tuscany; and

there is a claim among the poorer orders in this part of Italy, which has been too hastily credited by foreigners, of speaking a language quite as pure as the educated classes. It is certainly not true, whatever may be claimed for their Tuscan, as ancient or popular Tuscan. The Pisans, in general, also seem to have corrupted their pronunciation, and the Florentines, too, if report is to be believed. They use a soft aspirate instead of the *c*, as if their language were not genteel and tender enough already. *Casa* is *hasa,—cuoco* (a cook), *hoho,—locando, lohando,—cocomero, hohomero,*—and even *crazie* (a sort of coin), *hrazie.* But they speak well out, trolling the words clearly over the tongue.

There seems a good deal of talent for music among the Pisans, which does not know how to make its way. You never hear the poorest melody, but somebody strikes in with what he can muster up of a harmony. Boys go about of an evening, and parties sit at their doors, singing popular airs, and hanging as long as possible on the last chord. It is not an uncommon thing for gentlemen to play their guitars as they go along to a party. I heard one evening a voice singing past a window, that would not have disgraced an opera; and I once walked behind a common post-boy, who, in default of having another to help him to a harmony, contrived to make chords of all his notes, by rapidly

sounding the second and the treble, one after the other. The whole people are bitten with a new song, and hardly sing anything else till the next. There were two epidemic airs of this kind when I was there, which had been imported from Florence, and which the inhabitants sang from morning till night, though they were nothing remarkable. Yet Pisa is said to be the least fond of music, of any city in Tuscany.

I must not omit a great curiosity which is in the neighbourhood of Pisa, towards the sea;—namely, the existence of a race of camels, which was brought from the east during the crusades. I have not seen them out of the city, though the novelty of the sight in Europe, the sand of the sea-shore, and the vessels that sometimes combine with the landscape in the distance, are said to give it a look singularly Asiatic. They are used for agricultural purposes, and may be sometimes met within the walls. The forest between Pisa and another part of the sea-shore, is extensive and woody.

Pisa is a tranquil, an imposing, and even now a beautiful and stately city. It looks like what it is, the residence of an university: many parts of it seem made up of colleges; and we feel as if we ought to "walk gowned." It possesses the Campo Santo; its river is the river of Tuscan poetry, and furnished Michael Angelo with the subject of his cartoon; and

it disputes with Florence the birth of Galileo. Here, at all events, the great astronomer studied and taught: here his mind was born, and another great impulse given to the progress of philosophy and liberal opinion.

CHAPTER XX.

GENOA.

Removal to Genoa.—Shelley's house at Lerici.—Earthquake at Lerici.—Reputation of Englishmen in Italy for mad courage.—Courage of Italians.—Porto Venere.—Fishy population.—Maritime Apennines.—Domiciles at Albaro.—Account of the "Liberal."—Awkward mistake respecting two of its writers.—Lord Byron and Dr. Johnson.

TOWARDS the end of September, Lord Byron and myself, in different parties, left Pisa for Genoa. Tuscany had been rendered uncomfortable to him by the misadventures both there and at Leghorn; and at Genoa he would hover on the borders of his inclination for Greece. Perhaps he had already made arrangements for going thither.

On our way to Genoa we met at Lerici. He had an illness at that place; and all my melancholy was put to its height by seeing the spot which my departed friend had lived in, and his solitary mansion

on the sea-shore. Lerici is wild and retired, with a bay and rocky eminences; the people suited to it, something between inhabitants of sea and land. In the summer time they will be up all night dabbling in the water, and making wild noises. Here Trelawney joined us. He took me to the Villa Magni (the house just alluded to); and we paced over its empty rooms, and neglected garden. The sea fawned upon the shore, as though it could do no harm.

At Lerici we had an earthquake. The shock was the smartest we experienced in Italy. At Pisa there had been a dull intimation of one, such as happens in that city about once in three years. In the neighbourhood of Florence we had another less dull, but lasting only for an instant. It was exactly as if somebody with a strong hand had jerked a pole up against the ceiling of the lower room, right under one's feet. This was at Maiano, among the Fiesolan hills. People came out of their rooms, and inquired of one another what was the matter. At Lerici I awoke at dawn with an extraordinary sensation, and directly afterwards the earthquake took place. It was strong enough to shake the pictures on the wall; and it lasted a sufficient time to resemble the rolling of a waggon under an archway, which it did both in noise and movement. I got up and went to the window. The people were already collecting in the open place

beneath it; and I heard, in the clear morning air, the word *Terremoto* (earthquake) repeated from one to another. The sensation for the next ten minutes or so was very distressing. You expected the shock to come again, and to be worse. However, we had no more of it. We congratulated ourselves the more, because there was a tower on a rock just over our heads, which would have stood upon no ceremony with our inn. They told us, if I remember, that they had an earthquake on this part of the coast of Italy, about once every five years. Italy is a land of volcanoes, more or less subdued. It is a great grapery, built over a flue. If the earthquake did not come, it was thought the crops were not so good.

From Lerici, we proceeded part of our way by water, as far as Sestri. Lord Byron went in a private boat; Trelawney in another; myself and family in a felucca. It was pretty to see the boats with their white sails, gliding by the rocks over that blue sea. A little breeze coming on, our seamen were afraid, and put into Porto Venere, a deserted town a short distance from Lerici. I asked them if they really meant to put in, upon which they looked very determined on that point, and said that "Englishmen had no sense of danger." I smiled to think of the British Channel. I thought also of the thunder and lightning in this very sea, where they

might have seen British tars themselves astonished with fear. In Italy, Englishmen are called "the mad English," from the hazards they run. They like to astonish the natives by a little superfluous peril. If you see a man coming furiously down the street on horseback, you may be pretty certain he is an Englishman. An English mail-coach, with that cauliflower of human beings a-top of it, lumping from side to side, would make the hearts of a Tuscan city die within them. Not that the Italians are less brave than other nations. The modern Romans have lately shown what they can do in the best old Roman spirit, in spite of their having mounted guard so long under papal umbrellas; and the Piedmontese were among the best soldiers of Napoleon. But habit and imagination soften the bravest, when there seems no necessity for resisting them.

Porto Venere is like a petrified town in a story-book. The classical name allured us, and we roamed over it. It was curious to pass the houses one after the other, and meet not a soul. Such inhabitants as there are, confine themselves to the seashore.

After resting a few hours, we put forth again, and had a lazy, sunny passage to Sestri, where a crowd of people assailed us, like savages at an island, for our patronage and portmanteaux. They were robust, clamorous, fishy fellows, like so many children of the

Tritons in Raphael's pictures; as if those plebeian gods of the sea had been making love to Italian chambermaids. Italian goddesses have shown a taste not unsimilar, and more condescending; and English ones, too, in Italy, if scandal is to be believed. But Naples is the head-quarters of this over-growth of wild luxury. Marino, a Neapolitan, may have had it in his eye, when he wrote that fine sonnet of his, full of gusto, brawny and bearded, about Triton pursuing Cymothoe. (See *Parnaso Italiano*, tom. 41, p. 10.)

From Sestri we proceeded over the maritime part of the Apennines to Genoa. Their character is of the least interesting sort of any mountains, being neither distinct nor wooded; but undulating, barren, and coarse; without any grandeur but what arises from an excess of that appearance. They lie in a succession of great doughy billows, like so much enormous pudding, or petrified mud.

Genoa again!—With what different feelings we beheld it from those which enchanted us the first time! Mrs. Shelley, who preceded us, had found houses both for Lord Byron's family and my own at Albaro, a neighbouring village on a hill. We were to live in the same house with her; and in the Casa Negroto we accordingly found an English welcome. There were forty rooms in it, some of them such as would be considered splendid in England, and all neat and

new, with borders and arabesques. The balcony and staircase were of marble; and there was a little flower-garden. The rent of this house was twenty pounds a year. Lord Byron paid four-and twenty for his, which was older and more imposing, with rooms in still greater plenty, and a good piece of ground. It was called the Casa Saluzzi.* Mr. Landor and his family had occupied a house in the same village—the Casa Pallavicini. He has recorded an interesting dialogue that took place in it.† Of Albaro, and the city itself, I shall speak more at large in the course of the chapter.

The Genoese post brought us the first number of our new quarterly, the *Liberal*, accompanied both with hopes and fears, the latter of which were too speedily realized. Living now in a separate house from Lord Byron, I saw less of him than before; and, under all the circumstances, it was as well: for though we had always been on what are called "good terms," the cordiality did not increase. His friends in England, who, after what had lately taken place there in his instance, were opposed, naturally

* Are the Saluzzi family from Chaucer's *Country of Saluces*, whose "Markis" married the patient Griselda? Saluces was in the maritime Apennines, by Piedmont, and might have originated a family of Genoese nobles. Classical and romantic associations meet us in such abundance at every turn in Italy, that upon the least hint a book speaketh.

† *Imaginary Conversations*, vol. i. p. 179, second edition.

enough, to his opening new fields of publicity, did what they could to prevent his taking a hearty interest in the *Liberal;* and I must confess, that I did not mend the matter by my own inability to fall in cordially with his ways, and by a certain jealousy of my position, which prevented me, neither very wisely nor justly, from manifesting the admiration due to his genius, and reading the manuscripts he showed me with a becoming amount of thanks and good words. I think he had a right to feel this want of accord in a companion, whatever might be its value. A dozen years' later, reflection would have made me act very differently. At the same time, though the *Liberal* had no mean success, he unquestionably looked to its having a far greater; and the result of all these combined circumstances was, that the interest he took in it cooled in proportion as it should have grown warm, and after four numbers it ceased. They were all published during our residence in this part of Italy. Lord Byron contributed some poems, to which his customary publisher had objected on account of their fault-finding in Church and State, and their critical attacks on acquaintances. Among them was the *Vision of Judgment*, the best satire since the days of Pope. Churchill's satires, compared with it, are bludgeons compared with steel of Damascus. Hazlitt contributed some of the most entertaining of his vigorous essays; and Shelley had

left us his masterly translation of the *May-Day Night* in *Faust*. As to myself, if I may speak of my own articles after these, I wrote by far the greater number,—perhaps nearly half the publication; but I was ill; and with the exception of one or two, I hope they were not among my best. This, however, did not hinder great puzzlement among the critics of that day. I say it with not the slightest intention of self-compliment; and I should think him a very dull fellow who supposed it.

Puzzlement and posement of various sorts awaited many readers of the *Liberal*. A periodical work which is understood to be written by known authors, whose names are nevertheless unaffixed to their contributions, has the disadvantage of hazarding uneasiness to the minds of such readers, as pique themselves on knowing a man's style without really being sure of it. They long to assign the articles to this and that author, but they fear to be mistaken. The perplexity irritates them; they are forced to wait the judgments of others; and they willingly comfort the wound given to their self-love by siding with such as are unfavourable, and pronouncing the articles to be of an undistinguishable mediocrity. I do not know how far this kind of dilemma may have injured the *Liberal*. I suspect it had no little effect. But what must have exasperated, while it consoled it, critics of an opposite kind were some-

times as much in the wrong as the former were afraid of being. A signal instance occurred in the case of a writer not disesteemed in his day, whose name I suppress, because the mention of it might disconcert some relation. One of the poems in the *Liberal* is entitled the *Book of Beginnings*. Its subject is poetical exordiums. The writer in question attributed it to Lord Byron; and after denouncing the "atheists and scoffers," by whom, he said, his lordship had been "led into defiance of the sacred writings," thus proceeded to notice a religious passage from Dryden, which was quoted with admiration in the notes to the poem:—

"In vain was Lord Byron led into the defiance of the sacred writings; there are passages in his letters and in his works which show that religion might have been in his soul. Could we recite the following lines, and resist the force of them? It is true, that he marks them for the beauty of the verse, but no less for the sublimity of the conception; and I cannot but hope that, had he lived, he would have proved another instance of genius bowing to the power of truth."

Now the poem in question, and the notes to it, were written by myself, one of those "atheists and scoffers" (according to this gentleman), by whom the supposed writer of the poem had been "led into defiance of the sacred writings."

This person knew as little of my religion as he knew of an author's manner. Among these same notes of mine is the following passage:—

"What divine plays would not Beaumont and Fletcher have left us, if they had not been fine gentlemen about town, and ambitious to please a perishing generation! Their muse is like an accomplished country beauty, of the most exquisite kind, seduced up to town, and made familiar with the most devilish parts of it, yet retaining, through all her debauchery, a sweet regret, and an adoring fondness for nature. She has lilies about her paint and patch-boxes, and loves them almost as much as when she was a child."

I do not think that the author of *Don Juan* was accustomed to make critical reflections of that sort. I do not allude, of course, to the writing, but to the sentiment.

But what would the gentleman have thought of the following passage in another of my notes?

"I have stood in that chapel (in South-street) under the influence of that organ, and have felt the tears run down my cheeks at the crowd of thoughts that came upon me. . . . . I was struck to think of all the miseries and bloody wars that had accompanied the spread of the kindest of doctrines; and wondered how it was possible for men to look at the altar-piece before me, and hear the music that melted towards it, and not find out, that to injure and damn one another to eternity was unbecoming even the wrath of charity."

The noble poet, I think, was hardly accustomed to the confession of tears of that sort. He would have thought them weak. But the poem was written in the stanza of *Don Juan*, and, therefore, his Lordship was to be complimented with the religion of it, at the expense of his *Juanity*.

I will take this opportunity of recording some more anecdotes as they occur to me. My neighbour and myself used to walk in the grounds of the Casa Saluzzi; talking for the most part of indifferent things, and endeavouring to joke away the consciousness of our position. We joked even upon our differences of opinion. It was a jest between us, that the only book that was a thorough favourite on both sides, was Boswell's *Life of Johnson*. I used to talk of Johnson when I saw him disturbed, or when I wished to avoid other subjects. He asked me one day how I should have felt in Johnson's company. I said it was difficult to judge; because, living in other times, and one's character being modified by them, I could not help thinking of myself as I was now, and Johnson as he was in times previous: so that it appeared to me that I should have been somewhat "Jacobinical" in his company, and not disposed to put up with his *ipse dixits*. He said, that "Johnson would have awed him, he treated lords with so much respect." The reader, after what I have lately said, will see what was at the bottom of these remarks on both sides. Had the question been asked me now, I should have said, that I loved Johnson, and hope I should have shown him all due homage; though I think I should have been inclined sometimes to contest his conclusions more than they are contested by his interlocutors

in Boswell. Lord Byron liked to imitate Johnson, and say, "Why, sir," in a high mouthing way, rising, and looking about him. His imitation was very pleasant. Yet he hardly seemed to relish Peter Pindar's imitations, pleasant too as they were. I used to repeat to him those laughable passages out of *Bozzy and Piozzy.*

"Dear Dr. Johnson,—
(It is Mrs. Thrale who speaks)—
"*Dear* Dr. Johnson was in size an ox,
And of his uncle Andrew learnt to box;
A man to wrestlers and to bruisers dear,
Who kept the ring in Smithfield a *whole* year.
The Doctor had an uncle too, *ador'd*
By jumping gentry, called Cornelius Ford;
Who *jump'd* in boots, which *jumpers* never choose,
Far as a famous *jumper jump'd* in shoes."

Again; Mrs. Piozzi says,—

"Once at our house, *amidst our Attic feasts*,
We liken'd our acquaintances to *beasts:*
As for example—some to calves and hogs,
And some to bears and monkeys, cats and dogs.
We said (which charm'd the Doctor much, no doubt)
His mind was like, *of elephants, the snout;*
That could pick pins up, yet possess'd the vigour
Of trimming well the jacket of a tiger.

Bozzy. When Johnson was in Edinburgh, my wife,
To please his palate, studied for her life;
With ev'ry rarity she fill'd her house,
And gave the Doctor, for his dinner, *grouse.*

Piozzi. Dear Doctor Johnson left off drinks fermented,
With quarts of chocolate and cream *contented;*
Yet often down his throat's prodigious gutter,
Poor man! he pour'd *whole floods* of melted butter."

At these passages, which make me laugh whenever I repeat them, Lord Byron had too invincible a relish of a good thing not to laugh also; but he did not do it with good will. I attributed it at the time to a jealousy of the inferior wit; but I have no doubt that it was because I seemed to expect his admiration of the lines a little too confidently, and this, too, while withholding the tribute due to his own.

Ah! how I should have loved him, had he treated me with thorough candour himself, and set me that example of heartiness which it was my business to wait for rather than to originate, seeing that I was of the inferior rank, and in a condition to be obliged. It would have done, I think, a world of good on both sides; and what would it not have saved? Still, I ought to have discovered some mode, nevertheless, of exciting it; and I should have done so, had I known what was right and proper as well as I do now.

With the commiseration about the melted butter, we agreed heartily. When poor Lord Castlereagh killed himself, it was mentioned in the papers that he had taken his usual tea and buttered toast for breakfast. I said there was no knowing how far even so little a thing as buttered toast might not have fatally assisted in exasperating that ill state of the stomach which is found to accompany melancholy. As "the last feather breaks the horse's

back," so the last injury done to the organs of digestion may make a man kill himself. He agreed with me entirely in this; and said, the world were as much in the wrong, in nine cases out of ten, respecting the immediate causes of suicide, as they were in their notions about the harmlessness of this and that food, and the quantity of it.

It is a credit to my noble friend, that he was by far the pleasantest when he had got a little wine in his head. The only time I invited myself to dine with him, I told him I did it on that account, and that I meant to push the bottle so that he should intoxicate me with his good company. He said he would have a set-to; but he never did. It was a little before he left Italy; and there was a point in contest between us (not regarding myself) which he thought perhaps I should persuade him to give up. When in his cups, which was not often nor immoderately, he was inclined to be tender; but not weakly so, nor lachrymose. I know not how it might have been with everybody, but he paid me the compliment of being excited to his very best feelings; and when I rose late to go away, he would hold me down, and say with a look of entreaty, "Not yet." Then it was that I seemed to talk with the proper natural Byron as he ought to have been; and I used to think there was not a sacrifice which I could not have made to keep him in that tem-

per, and see his friends love him as much as the world admired. But I ought to have discovered the sacrifice at once. I should have broken the ice between us, that had been generated on points of literary predilection; and admired, and shown that I admired, as I ought to have done, his admirable genius. It was not only an oversight in me; it was a want of friendship. Friendship ought to have made me discover, what less cordial feelings had kept me blind to. Next morning the happy moment had gone, and nothing remained but to despair and joke.

In his wine he would volunteer an imitation of somebody, generally of Incledon. He was not a good mimic in the detail, but he could give a lively broad sketch; and over his cups his imitations were good-natured, which was not always the case at other times. His Incledon was vocal. I made pretensions to the oratorical part; and between us we boasted that we made up the entire phenomenon. He would sometimes, however, give a happy comprehensive idea of a person's manner and turn of mind by the utterance of a single phrase, or even word. Thus he would pleasantly pretend that Braham called "enthusiasm" *entoozymoozy;* and in the extraordinary combination of lightness, haste, indifference, and fervour with which he would pitch out that single word from his lips, accompanied with a gesture to correspond, he would really

set before you the admirable singer in one of his (then) characteristic passages of stage dialogue. He did not live to see Braham become an exception in his dialogue as in his singing.

Lord Byron left Italy for Greece, and our conversation was at an end. I will, therefore, request the reader's company in a walk with me about Genoa.

Genoa is truly "Genoa the Superb." Its finest aspect is from the sea, and from the sea I first beheld it. Imagine a glorious amphitheatre of white houses, with mountains on each side and at the back. The base is composed of the city with its churches and shipping; the other houses are country seats, looking out, one above the other, up the hill. To the left are the Alps with their snowy tops: to the right, and for the back, are the Apennines. This is Genoa. It is situate at the very angle of the pointed gulf, which is called after its name, and which presents on either side, as you sail up it, white villages, country seats, and olive groves.

When we first saw Genoa, which was the first Italian city we beheld, our notions of the Italian countenance were formidably startled by the pilot-boat, which came out to offer its assistance in conducting us by the mole. The mole had been injured greatly by the storms of the preceding winter. The boat contained, I thought, as ugly a set of faces as could well have been brought together. It was

a very neat boat, and the pilots were singularly neat and clean in their persons; but their faces! My wife looked at me as much as to say, "Are these our fine southern heads?" The children looked at me: we all looked at one another: and what was very inhospitable, the pilots all looked at us. The sun was in their eyes; and there they sat on their oars, grinning up at us, and bargaining with the captain. The older ones were like monkeys; the younger like half-withered masks—hard, stony, and pale. One young man, however, was handsome both in face and person: he had the fine black eyes and brown colour we expected to meet with; and luckily, driving a less hard bargain than the rest (which was to be expected of him), the captain agreed with him, and he came on board. His dress and appearance we found might be taken as a specimen, and by no means an uncommon specimen, of the better order of boatmen, upon this and the Tuscan coast: for we soon had the pleasure of being agreeably disappointed with regard to the slovenliness we had looked for. It was that of a smart English apprentice, with his coat off. He had a very neat black hat on, in the modern style, good shoes and silk handkerchief, and blue linen pantaloons coming up high, and fastened over his shoulders with braces. Though aware that one style of dress, with little modification, prevails nowadays all over Europe,

one cannot help feeling a kind of disappointment, and even surprise, at seeing Italians dressed like Englishmen. It seems a disgrace to them, not because they are like us, but because they look unlike themselves and their climate, and disappoint us of a becoming variety. We thought how well our pilot would have looked in his cap and cloak. But we were thankful for his face. I asked him where the Doria palace stood. "Behold it!" said he, pointing to the left; and we looked upon the handsome yet comparatively humble mansion, which Andrew Doria built for himself and his descendants, when he was at the height of his power. It is a low long building, with an arcade, and a garden before it, and looks over the harbour which he rendered so eminent.

We had scarcely got rid of our ugly men, when we were assailed with a much worse sight, a gang of ugly boys. They were a set of young knaves, poking about for what they could lay their hands on; and came loitering and hanging about the vessel under pretence of asking charity. Their fathers and mothers, or *their* fathers and mothers, or manners and customs from the beginning, had much to answer for in contriving such a set of juvenile vagabonds. They clung about the sides of the vessel, with faces, and hands too, like monkeys. They had no foreheads, and moved their hands as if they were paws. Never did we see a more striking look of something

removed from humanity; and the worst of it was, they had no sort of comfort in their faces; their laugh was as melancholy, yet unfeeling, as their abject and canting whine. They looked like impudent squalid old men of the world, in the shape of boys; and were as pale and almost as withered. They were like the sordid imps of Massinger or Decker. Sindbad's Old Man of the Sea would have had such children, only stronger.

Boats with awnings were rowing backwards and forwards, many of them, particularly as the afternoon advanced, containing bathers, who dressed and undressed themselves, as they went along, in the most unscrupulous manner. One of the very commonest sights was to see men in their shirts; and not a very uncommon one, females in their company. People bathed among the shipping at all times of the day, and ladies would pass them, nothing wondering, in boats. This grossness, which libertinism itself would diminish, I witnessed afterwards at Leghorn; and I have seen people bathing in the Arno in the very middle of Pisa. I am not squeamish; and think some of our northern notions as gross as anything else; but where there is neither innocence nor even a refined sensualism, there is something worse than indecent in these public expositions of the person. The extreme of formality is better, inasmuch as it approaches nearer to one of the two. But something,

in the progress of such customs, is to be allowed for difference of climate.

The first handsome countenance that came near us, after the pilot's, was that of a boy who accompanied a custom-house officer, and who was going to bathe. But he had no modesty in his aspect, and the want of it was not bettered by his ear-rings and the cut of his hair, which made him look like a girl. Numbers of lads had the same look, on the same accounts; even when apparently seventeen or eighteen years old. The short, thick custom-house officer, grave, obsequious, and yet indifferent, was like a man made of dough; and he had the most exaggerated cocked-hat and worsted epaulets which we had ever beheld out of the pale of a pantomime.

The first sight of Italian women disappointed us almost as much as Italian men, because we expected still more of them. Of course, had we seen them first, they would have disappointed us more. But I afterwards found, that as you ascended among the more educated classes, the faces improved; and I have reason to believe, that most of the women whom we saw in boats, deceived us as to their rank in this respect. In Italy, gentlemen do not look so much like gentlemen as in England, but there are greater numbers of women who look like ladies. This is partly owing to their dress. In Genoa particularly, the out-of-door head-dress for women of

all ranks is a white veil; and an Englishman, unaccustomed to see this piece of drapery upon common heads, and observing, besides, the stateliness with which female Italians carry themselves, thinks he is oftener looking at gentlewomen than he is.

We had not been long in harbour before we inquired, with all the eagerness of voyagers, for our fresh provisions. In Italy, we also looked for our heaps of fruit; and we had them—in all the luxury of baskets and vine-leaves, and a cheapness that made us laugh. Grapes were not in season; but there were figs, apricots, fresh almonds, oranges, pears, and gigantic cherries, as fine as they were large. We also took leave of our biscuit for excellent bread; and had milk brought to us in bottles, which were stopped with vine-leaves. The mutton turned out to be kid, and lean enough; but it was a novelty, and we ate it upon a principle of inquiry. An excellent light wine accompanied our repast, drunk, not in little cautious glasses, like our "hot intoxicating liquor," but out of tumblers. It was just threepence English a quart. It had, notwithstanding its lightness, a real vinous body, and both looked and tasted like a sort of claret; but we were sorry to find it was French, and not Italian. As to the fruit,—to give a specimen in one word,—the apricots, very fine ones, were twopence a gallon.

The quay of Genoa is a handsome one, profuse of

good pavement, gate, &c., and the abundance of stone everywhere, the whiteness of the houses, and the blueness of the sky, cast, at first sight, an extraordinary look of lightness and cleanliness upon everything. Nor are you disappointed in Genoa, as people are at Lisbon, between the fairness of the look outside and the dirt within. The large wrinkled features of the old women, with their uncapped gray hair, strike you at first as singularly plain: so do the people in general: but everything looks clean and neat, and full of the smart bustle of a commercial city. What surprises you is the narrowness of the streets. As soon as you have passed the gate, you think you have entered upon a lane, remarkably good indeed for a lane,—a sort of Bond-street of an alley,—but you have no conception that it is a street, and of the ordinary dimensions. The shops also, though neat, are entirely open, like English potato shops, or at best like some of the little comb shops now rarely to be seen in London. I mean, they have no windows, or such walls as would hold them. After entering this street, you soon come upon the public place, or exchange, which is a very fair one. You cross over this into the principal street, or street of goldsmiths, full of shops in which trinkets are sold, including a world of crosses and other Christian emblems, and huge ear-rings. It is the custom in several parts of Italy for girls to carry their mar-

riage portion about with them, in the shape of gold ear-rings and crosses; and no maid-servant thinks herself properly dressed on mass-days without announcing, in this way, that she is equally fit for heaven and a husband. The gold is very thin, but solidity is made up for by the length and width of the ornaments; and the ear-rings are often heavy enough to tear through the lobes of the ears. Imagine a brown, black-eyed girl, with her thick hair done up in combs, a white veil over it, a coloured, sometimes a white gown, large dangling gold ornaments at her ears and bosom, and perhaps bare feet or tattered shoes, and you have the complete portrait of an Italian maid-servant or peasant girl, issuing forth to church or to a dance. The men of all classes dress more like the same classes in other countries, with an exception, however, as before noticed, in favour of the humbler ones. Yet you often see the old Genoese cap, and you notice a set of porters from Bergamo, who wear a puckered kilt. They are a good-looking race, and are esteemed for their honesty. The burdens they carry are enormous. The labourer of Italy often shows his propensity to a piece of drapery, by hanging his jacket over his shoulders with the sleeves dangling; a custom naturally prompted by the heat.

In England we have delicate names for some of our streets and alleys. There is Love-lane, Maiden-

lane, Garden-court, Green Arbour-court, &c., but in Italy they beat us hollow. Pisa has not only Love-street and Lily-street, but Beautiful Ladies'-lane, and the Lane of the Beautiful Towers. In Genoa, after passing through Goldsmith-street, and another that leads up from it, you come out by the post-office upon the Piazza delle Fontane Amorose, —the Place of the Amorous Fountains. There is a magnificent mansion in it, containing baths; and another, adorned on the outside with paintings of festive women. But here all the houses begin to be magnificent mansions, and you again recognise "Genova la Superba." From the Piazza delle Fontane Amorose you turn into the Strada Nuova, which leads round through another sumptuous street into the Strada Balbi, fit, says Madame de Staël, for a congress of kings. The three streets are literally a succession of palaces on each side of the way; and these palaces are of costly architecture, and are adorned inside with the works of the Italian masters. Marble is lavished everywhere. It is like a street raised by Aladdin, to astonish his father-in-law, the Sultan. Yet there is one lamentable deficiency. Even these streets are narrow. I do not think the Strada Nuova is wider than Bond-street *without* the pavements. "A lane!" you cry. Yes, a lane of Whitehalls, encrusted with the richest architecture. Imagine how much the buildings lose by this con-

finement, and then wonder how it could have taken place. The alleged reason is, that in a hot country shade is wanted, and therefore beauty is sacrificed to utility. But the reason is a bad one: for porticos might have been used, as at Bologna, and the street made so wide as to render the disadvantage to the architecture a comparative nothing. The circumstance probably originated in some reasons connected with the ground, or the value of it, and the pressure of the population within the then city-walls. Some other magnificent streets, built subsequently, are wider, though still a good deal too narrow. The Genoese have found out, before ourselves, the folly of calling a street New-street; but they have not very wisely corrected it by naming one of their last, *Newest*-street, — Strada Nuovissima. Upon this principle, they must call the next street they build, Newer-than-all-street, or Extremely-new-street, or New-of-the-very-newest-description-street. They seem to have no idea of calling their streets, as we do, after the names of obscure builders and proprietors; a very dull custom, and idle piece of vanity; especially in a country which abounds in great names. The streets of a metropolis ought to exhaust the whole nomenclature of great men, national or otherwise, before it begins with bricklayers. Nay, it would be very handsome to see the names of illustrious foreigners mingled with those of the

nation; and I have no doubt that as nations become fused together by intercourse, such compliments will take place. They will be regarded, indeed, as discharges of debts: for who does not feel grateful to the wise and good of all countries?

In Genoa I first had the pleasure of seeing a religious procession. I found chairs brought out in one of the streets, and well-dressed company seated on each side, as in a music-room. In Genoa some of the streets are paved all over. In the rest, the flat pavement is in the middle, and used both for traffic and walking. This, I suppose, originated in a vile custom which they have in several cities of Italy,—the same which Smollet speaks of in the Edinburgh of his time. Accidents frequently occur in consequence; but anything is sooner mended than a habit originating in idleness or moral indifference; and the inhabitants and the mules go on in their old way. But to return to the procession.—The reader must imagine a narrow street with the company, as abovementioned, and an avenue left for the passage of the spectacle. The curiosity expressed in the company's faces was of a very mild description, the next thing to indifference. The music was heard at a little distance, then came a bustling sound of feet, and you saw the friars advancing. Nearly at the head of the procession was a little live Virgin about four years old, walking in much state, with a silver-

looking crown on her head, and a sceptre in her hand. A pleased relation helped her along, occasionally righting the crown and sceptre, which she bore with all that dignified gravity which children so soon imitate. By her side was another grown person, equally pleased, supporting a still smaller St. John, dressed in a lamb-skin, and apparently selected for his office on account of his red little waxen cheeks and curly flaxen hair. He did not seem quite as much *au fait* in the matter as the Virgin, but was as grave as need be, and not a little heated. A string of clergy followed in their gowns, carrying large lighted wax candles, and each one assisted by a personage, whose appearance was singularly striking to a foreigner from a Protestant country.

These coadjutors were neither more nor less than the very raggedest and dirtiest fellows, old and young, in all Genoa. There was one to every light. His object was to collect the wax that fell from the candles, which he did in a piece of paper; and the candle seemed to be made to gutter on purpose, in order to oblige him with as much of it as possible. The wax is sold by the gainer. I dare say this accompaniment of pauperism has a reference to the best doctrines of the Christian religion; but it is a singular mistake, and has a most unedifying appearance. Poverty should not be in this squalid condition, especially by the side of comfortable clergy-

men. The faces, too, of the poor fellows had, for the most part, all the signs of bad education. Now and then there was a head like the beggar who sat for Sir Joshua's Ugolino, — a fine head, but still a beggar. Some were of a portentous *rafishness.*

As to the priests and friars (for there followed a variety), I could not help observing, that, with very few exceptions, the countenances grew indifferent and worldly as they grew old. A few of the young ones were worthy of the heads in Raphael. One young man had a saint-like manner with him, casting down his eyes, and appearing absorbed in meditation; but I thought, when he did cast them up (which he instantly followed by casting them down again), it was in approaching the young ladies. He had certainly a head fit for an Abelard.

I spoke just now of a bustle of feet. You do not know at first to what the loudness of it is owing, but the secret is explained as a large machine approaches, preceded by music. This is a group of wax-work as large as life, carried on the shoulders of ambling friars; for they are obliged to shuffle into that step on account of the weight. It represented, on the present occasion, St. Antonio kneeling before the Virgin, around whom were little angels fluttering like Cupids. It is impossible not to be reminded of Paganism by these spectacles. Indeed, as the Jupiter of the Capitol still sits there under his new

name of St. Peter, so there is no doubt that the ancients, under other names, had these identical processions. The Cupids remain unaltered. The son of Myrrha himself could not look more lover-like than St. Antonio, nor Venus more polite than the Virgin; and the flowers stuck all about (the favourite emblem of the Cyprian youth) completed the likeness to an ancient festival of Adonis. So also would the priests have looked in their ancient garments; so would have come the music and the torches (paupers excepted); and so would the young priests have looked, in passing by the young ladies. To see the grandeurs of the Catholic religion, you must consult its rarest and most serious festivals, its pictures, and its poet Dante. I must not forget, that among the musical instruments were violins. One set of friars wore cowls over their faces, having holes only to see through, and looking extremely hideous,—like executioners. Or were they brethren of the benevolent order of the Misericordia, who disguise themselves, only the more nobly to attend to any disaster that calls upon them for aid? If so, observe how people may be calumniated merely in consequence of a spectator's ignorance. Among the persons who showed their faces, and who did not seem at all ashamed of them, was one good-natured, active individual, who ran back, with great vivacity, to encourage the machine-bearers. He looked as

much as to say, "It is hot enough for you, Heaven knows!" and so it was.

Somebody has said, that in the south all the monks look like soldiers, and all the soldiers like monks. I dare say this might have been the case before the spread of liberal opinions; but it is so no longer. In Spain and Portugal it cannot be so; though the Sardinian troops quartered in Genoa were for the most part under-grown and poor-looking men. The officers, however, were better. They had a propensity, common I am told in the south, to over-grown caps and epaulets; but they had otherwise a manly aspect, and looked more like gentlemen than any one else. This, indeed, is always the case, where there is any difference; military habits begetting an air of self-possession. The Piedmontese soldiery were remarkably well-dressed. They had a bad way of learning their exercise. They accompanied every motion,—the whole set of men,—with a loud Ho! just as if a multitude of quick paviours were at work. This, besides encouraging noise, must take away from a ready dependence on the eye.

I used often to go to the churches in Genoa and elsewhere. I liked their quiet, their coolness, and their richness. Besides, I find my own religion in some part or other of all imaginative religions. In one of the churches are pillars of porphyry, and several are very imposing; but they struck me upon

the whole as exhibiting the genius of a commercial rather than a tasteful country; as being more weighty and expensive than beautiful. There are some good pictures; but by far the greater number adorn the houses of the nobility. In all Catholic churches, there is an unfortunate mixture of petty ornaments with great, of dusty artificial flowers with fine altar-pieces, and of wretched little votive pictures, and silver hearts and legs, stuck up by the side of the noblest pieces of art.

This is another custom handed down from antiquity. I was reminded of Horace's Ode to Pyrrha, by a painting of a shipwreck, in which the wind blew one way and the sails another. If a man has got rid of a pain in the pericardium, he dedicates a little silver heart to the saint whose assistance he prayed for. If a toe has been the complaining party, he hangs up a toe. The general feeling is good, but not so the detail. It is affecting, however, to think, that many of the hearts hung up (and they are by far the most numerous) have been owing to pangs of the spirit.

The most interesting thing I met with in the Genoese churches, next to a picture by Raphael and Giulio Romano in that of St. Stephen, was a sermon by a friar on Weeping. He seemed a popular preacher, and held the attention of his audience for a good hour. His exordium was in a gentle and

restrained voice, but he warmed as he went on, and became as loud and authoritative as the tenderness of his subject could well permit. He gave us an account of all sorts of Tears—of the tears of joy and the tears of sorrow, of penitent tears, tears of anger, spite, ill-temper, worldly regret, love, patience, &c.; and from what I could collect, with an ear unaccustomed to hear Italian spoken, a very true, as well as full and particular account, it was. The style was more florid than in our northern sermons. He spoke of murmuring rills and warbling nightingales, and admitted all the merits of poetical luxury; but in denouncing luxury in general, it was curious to hear a stout, jovial-looking friar exhorting his auditors to value above all other enjoyments that of weeping in solitude. The natives are not likely to be too much softened by injunctions of this description.

The houses in Genoa are very high as well as large. Many of them are painted on the outside, not only with pictures, but with imitations of architecture; and whatever we may think of such a taste, these displays must have looked magnificent when the paintings were first executed. Some of them look so now, colours in this beautiful climate retaining their vividness for centuries out of doors. But in some instances, the paintings being done upon stucco, the latter has partly crambled away, and this gives a shabby, dilapidated appearance to houses

otherwise excellent. Nobody seems to think of repairing them. It is the same with many of the houses unpainted, and with common garden walls, most of which must have once made a splendid appearance. The mere spirit of commerce has long succeeded to its ancient inclusion of a better one; or Genoa would not be what it is in many respects. But a Genoese must nevertheless have grand notions of houses; especially as in this city, as well as the rest of Italy, shopkeepers sometimes occupy the ground floors of the finest mansions. You shall see a blacksmith or a carpenter looking out of a window where you might expect a duchess.

Neither Genoa nor even the country around it abounds in trees. It is a splendid sea-port of stone and marble, and the mountains in the neighbourhood are barren, though they soon begin to be clothed with olive-trees. But among the gigantic houses and stone walls you now and then detect a garden, with its statues and orange trees; some of the windows have vines trailed over them, not in the scanty fashion of our creepers, but like great luxuriant green hair hanging over the houses' eyes; and sometimes the very highest stories have a terrace along the whole length of the house embowered with them. Calling one day upon a gentleman who resided in an elevated part of the suburbs, and to get at whose abode I had walked through a hot sun and a city of

stone, I was agreeably surprised, when the door opened, with a long yellow vista of an arcade of vines, at once basking in the sun and defending from it. In the suburbs there are some orchards in all the southern luxuriance of leaves and fruit. In one of these, I walked among heaps of vines, olives, cherry, orange, and almond trees, and had the pleasure of plucking fresh lemons from the bough, a merry old brown gardener, with a great straw hat and bare legs, admiring all the while my regard for those commonplaces, and encouraging me with a good-natured paternity to do what I pleased. The cherries were Brobdignagian, and bursting with juice. Next the orchard was a *wine-garden*, answering to our *tea-gardens*, with vine-arbours and seats as with us, where people drink wine and play at their games. Returning through the city, I saw a man in one of the bye streets alternately singing and playing on a pipe, exactly as we conceive of the ancient shepherds.

One night I went to the opera, which was indifferent enough, but I understand it is a good deal better sometimes. The favourite composer here, and all over Italy, is Rossini, a truly national genius, full of the finest animal spirits, yet capable of the noblest gravity. My northern faculties were scandalized at seeing men in the pit with *fans!* Effeminacy is not always incompatible with courage, but

it is a very dangerous help towards it; and I wondered what Doria would have said, had he seen a captain of one of his galleys indulging his cheeks in this manner. Yet perhaps they did so in his own times. What would be effeminate in a man of the north, unaccustomed to it, may be a harmless trifle to a southern.

One night, on our first arrival in Genoa, the city was illuminated, and bonfires and rockets put in motion, in honour of St. John the Baptist. The effect from the harbour was beautiful; fire, like the stars, having a brilliancy in this pure atmosphere, of which we have no conception. The scent of the perfumes employed in the bonfires was very perceptible on board ship.

You learn for the first time in this climate, what colours really are. No wonder it produces painters. An English artist of any enthusiasm might shed tears of vexation, to think of the dull medium through which blue and red come to him in his own atmosphere, compared with this. One day we saw a boat pass us, which instantly reminded us of Titian, and accounted for him: and yet it contained nothing but an old boatman in a red cap, and some women with him in other colours, one of them in a bright yellow petticoat. But a red cap in Italy goes by you, not like a mere cap, much less anything vulgar or butcher-like, but like what

it is, an intense specimen of the colour of red. It is like a scarlet bud in the blue atmosphere. The old boatman, with his brown hue, his white shirt, and his red cap, made a complete picture; and so did the women and the yellow petticoat. I have seen pieces of orange-coloured silk hanging out against a wall at a dyer's, which gave the eye a pleasure truly sensual. Some of these boatmen are very fine men. I was rowed to shore one day by a man the very image of Kemble. He had nothing but his shirt on, and it was really grand to see the mixed power and gracefulness with which all his limbs came into play as he pulled the oars, occasionally turning his heroic profile to give a glance behind him at other boats. They generally row standing, and pushing from them.

The most interesting sight, after all, in Genoa, was the one we first saw—the Doria palace. Bonaparte lodged there when he was in Genoa; but this, which would have been one of its greatest praises, had he done all he could for liberty, is one of its least. Andrew Doria dwelt there after a long life, which he spent in giving security and glory to his country, and which he crowned by his refusal of power. "I know the value," said he, "of the liberty I have earned for my country, and shall I finish by taking it from her?" When upwards of eighty, he came forward and took the command of

an armament in a rough season. His friends remonstrated. "Excuse me," said he, "I have never yet stopped for anything when my duty was in the way, and at my time of life one cannot get rid of one's old habits." This is the very perfection of a speech, —a mixture of warrantable self-esteem, modesty, energy, pathos, and pleasantry; for it contains them all. He died upwards of ninety.

I asked for Doria's descendants, and was told they were rich. The Pallavicini, with whom the Cromwell family were connected, are extant. I could ascertain nothing more of the other old families, except that they had acquired a considerable dislike of the English; which, under all circumstances at that time, was in their favour. I found one thing, however, which they *did;* and I must correct, in favour of this one thing, what I have said about the Doria palace; for the sight of it upon the whole gave me still greater satisfaction. This was the overthrow of the Genoese Inquisition. There was a wish to rebuild it; but this the old families opposed; and the last ruins of it were being cleared away. It was pleasant to see the workmen crashing its old marble jaws.

Genoa has shown how much and how little can be done by mere commerce. A great man here and there in former times is an exception; and the princely mansions, the foundations of schools and

hospitals, and the erection of costly churches, attest that in similar periods money-getting had not degenerated into miserliness. But the Genoese did not cultivate mind enough to keep up the breed of patriots; and it remained for an indignant spirit to issue out of a neighbouring arbitrary monarchy and read them lectures on their absorption in money-getting. Alfieri, in his *Satire on Commerce*, ranks them with their mules. It avails nothing to a people to be merely acquiring money, while the rest of the world are acquiring ideas;—a truth which England has gloriously understood, and, it is to be trusted, will still more gloriously illustrate. It turns out, that Genoa and its neighbourhood have no pretensions to Columbus; which is lucky for her. He was born at Cuccaro, in the province of Aqui, not far from Asti — Alfieri's birth-place. Chiabrera, who is sometimes called the Italian Pindar, was born near Genoa, at Savona. I have read little of him; but he must have merit to be counted an Italian classic; and it says little for the Genoese, that I could not find a copy of his works at their principal bookseller's. Frugoni, their other poet, was born, I believe, in the same place. He is easy and lively, but wrote a great deal too much, probably for bread. There is a pleasant petition of his in verse to the Genoese senate, about some family claims, in which he gives an account of his debts that must have

startled the faculties of that prudent and opulent body. A few more Frugonis, however, and a few less rich men, would have been better for Genoa. The best production I ever met with from a Genoese pen, is a noble sonnet by Giambattista Pastorini, a Jesuit; written after the bombardment of the city by the troops of Louis XIV. The poet glories in the resistance made by Genoa, and kisses the ruins caused by the bombardment with transport. What must have been his mortification, when he saw the Doge and a number of senators set out for France, to go and apologize to Louis XIV. for having been so erroneous as to defend their country!

There is a proverb which says of Genoa, that it has a sea without fish, land without trees, men without faith, and women without modesty. Ligurian trickery is a charge as old as Virgil. But M. Millin very properly observes (*Voyage en Savoie*, &c.), that accusations of this description are generally made by jealous neighbours, and that the Genoese have most likely no more want of good faith than other Italians who keep shops. I must confess, at the same time, that the most barefaced trick ever attempted to be practised on myself, was by a Genoese. The sea, it is said, has plenty of fish, only the duty on it is very high, and the people prefer butchers' meat. This is hardly a good reason why fish is not eaten at a seaport. Perhaps it is naturally scarce at the extreme

point of a gulf like that of Genoa. The land is naked enough, certainly, in the immediate vicinity, though it soon begins to be otherwise. As to the women, they have fine eyes and figures, but by no means appear destitute of modesty; and modesty has much to do with appearance. Wholesale charges of want of modesty are, at all times and in all places, most likely to be made by those who have no modesty themselves.

The Genoese are not a musical specimen of the Italians; though the national talent seems lurking wherever you go. The most beggarly minstrel gets another to make out a harmony with him, or some sort of an instrument, if only a gourd with a string or two. Such, at least, appeared to me a strange "wild-fowl" of a fiddle, which a man was strumming one day,—or rather, a gourd stuck upon a long fiddle of deal. They all sing out their words distinctly, some accompanying themselves all the while in the guitar style, others putting in a symphony now and then, even if it be nothing better than two notes always the same. There was one blind beggar who seemed an enthusiast for Rossini. Imagine a sturdy fellow in rags, laying his hot face upon the fiddle, rolling his blind eye-balls against the sun, and vociferating, with all the true open-mouthed and syllabical particularity of the Italians, a part of one of the duets of that splendid master. His companion having

his eyesight, and being therefore not so vivacious, sings his part with a sedater vigour; though even when the former is singing a solo, I have heard the associate throw in some unisons at intervals, as though his help had been of necessity wanting to the blind man, on vocal as well as corporal occasions.

I will conclude these remarks on Genoa with a specimen or two of its dialect, which is much disdained by the Tuscans, but which the Genoese say is the next best dialect in Italy to the Venetian. I know not what the Neapolitans and Sicilians would say to this; but it is certainly better than the Mantuan and Bergamasque, specimens of which (together with Venetian, Neapolitan, and Paduan), are to be found in *Coxe's Picture of Italy*. Dante says, in his treatise on the *Vulgar Tongue*, that if the Genoese were deprived of the letter *z*, they would be dumb. But Dante's dislikes did not stand upon ceremony. When written, the dialect has a look of Provençal; and doubtless it contains a good deal of old French, and has drawn upon all its neighbours: *z* abounds in the shape of *s* and *x*, as well as in its own; but not anything to the extent that Dante speaks of. They have the French *u*, which they write *œu*; and their diphthong without the *u* has also a petty effect. The soft *gl* of the Tuscans they convert into a *dg* or *double g*, which often occurs, and is very unpleasant. Thus *figlio*, a son, is *figgiœu*: and

their words for *pigliare pane*, to get bread, sound as if they said *pigger pang*, the *r* at the same time being heard very little, if at all, like the final one of Londoners. Indeed, I observe in their books, that they write their infinitive moods without the *r*, putting a circumflex instead, as *piggiâ*, *passâ*, *spareg̃â*, *da fâ*. I should suppose they dropped this *r*, which adds so much strength to the softness of the Tuscan, in order to diminish the roughness of their language, if they did not seem to take pains to add to it in other instances. The people, as in all commercial countries, have a tendency to cut their words short for despatch of business; and their pronunciation is harsh and mean. There is a joke of a Neapolitan telling a man, in a fine open-chested voice, that he had seen an eagle fly; upon which the Genoese asks, in his pettier tones, whether an eagle has wings. But whether this is to ridicule the boasting of the Neapolitan, or the ignorance of the Genoese, I know not.

Neapolitan. "*Haggio veduta un aquila volare.*" (I have seen an eagle fly.)

Genoese. "*A i äeia i -ae?*" (Has an eagle wings?)

This brevity sounds still shorter than it looks:—(*A-yea-a-ee-ai.*) The Genoese language seems copious and expressive, and I am told they have good translations of Tasso, and of some of Molière's come-

dies. Serássi, Tasso's biographer, speaks highly of the former. Their principal native poet, Cavalli, lived in the time of Chiabrera, who eulogizes him as a man of genius.

The following is a specimen of the Genoese dialect preceded by Tuscan, in order to show the extraordinary nature of the difference.

Tuscan. Un signore cenando a un osteria in una piccola città, quando fu sparecchiato, l'oste gli domandò, come gli era piaciuta la cena. "Moltissimo," rispose quel signore; "posso dire d'aver cenato bene al par di qualunque gran personaggio nel regno." "Eccettuato il Signor Governatore," disse l'oste.— "Io non eccettuo nessuno," rispose egli. "Ma voi dovete sempre eccettuare il Signor Governatore," replicò l'oste. "Ma io non voglio," soggiunse il gentiluomo. In breve, la loro disputa si accesse talmente, che l'oste, il quale era un magistrato subalterno, ma nôn però simile a Solone o a Licurgo, fece chiamare il gentiluomo davanti al Governatore. Questo magistrato, la cui capacità era in perfetto equilibrio con quella dell' oste, disse con aria grave al gentiluomo, che l'eccettuare il Signor Governatore in ogni cosa era in quella città un inveteratissimo costume; e che a tal costume era obbligato ciascuno d'uniformarsi; e perciò lo condannava all' amenda d'uno scellino per aver ricusato di farlo. "Benissimo," rispose il gentiluomo: "ecco uno scellino; ma

possa io morire se v'è nel mondo un più gran pazzo dell' oste, Eccettuato il Signor Governatore."

Genoese. Cenando un scioú otaïa t'unna piccola çittæ, appenna a to-a fu desbarraççâ, l'oste ghe domandò come gh'era piaxua a çennha. "Moltissimo," ghe rispose quello scioú; "posso assegüave d'avei çenöu ben a-o paro de qualunque gran personaggio do' regno. "Eççettuöu ò Scioú Governo'u," ghe disse l'oste. "Mi non eççettúo nisciun," ghe rispose o' scioú. "Ma vui dovei sempre eççettuâ ò Scioú Governöu," replicò l'oste. "E mi non veuggio eççettuâ un corno," soggiunse o' gentilommo. In poco tempo a disputa a se aseâdo a tâ segno, che l'oste, u quale u l'era un magistrato subalterno, non però simile a Solon o a Licurgo, o feççe ciammâ o' gentilommo davanti o Governöu. Questo magistrato, che in punto de capacitæ o l'era in perfetto equilibrio con l'oste, o disse con aïa grave a-o gentilommo, che in l'eççettuâ o' Governöu in tutte æ cose l'era un uso antighissimo in quella çittæ; che ciascun era obligöu d'uniformâse a quest' uso, e che per avei recusöu da fâlo, o lo condannava all'emenda d'un scellin. "Va benissimo," rispose gentilommo, "piggiæ chi un scellin; ma vorrieiva ese ammassöu, se se treuva a-o mondo un ommo cuì matto de l'oste, Eççettuöu ò Scioù Governöu."

Translation. A gentleman supping at an inn in a petty city, the landlord, when the things were cleared

away, asked him whether his supper had pleased him. "Very much," said the gentleman: "I may affirm that I have supped as well as the greatest man in the kingdom." "Except the Signor Governor," said the landlord. "I except nobody," returned the other." "But you ought always to except the Signor Governor," replied the host. "But I will not," said the gentleman. In short, the dispute grew so warm, that the host, who was a bit of a magistrate himself, not very like Solon or Lycurgus, summoned his guest before the Governor. This officer, whose capacity was on a level with that of his informer, told the gentleman with the greatest solemnity, that to except the Governor upon every occasion was a custom of the most ancient standing, to which all persons were obliged to conform, and therefore he condemned him to the penalty of a shilling for having refused to do so. "Mighty well," replied the gentleman; "there 's your shilling; but hang me if there is a greater fool upon earth than the landlord,—except the Signor Governor."

This Governor reminds me of another story, respecting the then Governor of Genoa; a different sort of man, and popular, notwithstanding his Sardinian office. He was a Savoyard marquis of the name of D'Yennes, and is said to have related the story himself with much glee. As he was coming to take possession of his appointment, he stopped at a

town not far from Genoa, the inhabitants of which were ambitious of doing him honour. They accordingly gave him an entertainment, at which was an allegorical picture containing *a hyæna surrounded with Cupids.* The hyæna was supposed to be a translation of his name. Upon requesting an explanation of the compliment, he received the following smiling reply:—"*Les Amours, Monsieur, sont nous; et vous etes la bête.*" ("The loves, sir, are ourselves; the beast is you.")

CHAPTER XXI.

FLORENCE—BACCHUS IN TUSCANY—THE VENUS DE' MEDICI—AND ITALY IN GENERAL.

Florence.—Music at night.—Maiano.—Boccaccio.—May-day at Maiano.—An English "snuggery" in the Convent of St. Baldassare.—Landor.—Mr. Kirkup.—Lord Dillon.—Bacchus in Tuscany.—*Tuscan and English landscape.—Proposed English magazine at Florence.*—Christianism.—*Maddalena de Medici.—The Venus de' Medici.—Finger of Galileo.—An involuntary bumper at parting with Florence.—The cicala.—The fire-fly.—Trees of Italy.—Manners and morals of the people.—Alfieri.—Maccaroni.—The movement.—The Pope.*

RESOLVING to remain a while in Italy, though not in Genoa, we took our departure from that city in the summer of the year 1823, and returned into Tuscany in order to live at Florence. We liked Genoa on some accounts, and none the less for having a son born there, who, from that hour to this, has been a comfort to us. But in Florence there were more conveniences for us, more books, more fine arts, more illustrious memories, and a greater concourse of Englishmen; so that we might possess, as it were, Italy and England together. In Genoa we

no longer possessed a companion of our own country; for Mrs. Shelley had gone to England; and we felt strange enough at first, thus seeking a home by ourselves in a foreign land.

Unfortunately, in the first instance, the movement did us no good; for it was the height of summer when we set out, and in Italy this is not the time for being in motion. The children, however, living temperately, and not yet being liable to cares which temperance could not remove, soon recovered. It was otherwise with the parents; but there is a habit in being ill, as in everything else; and we disposed ourselves to go through our task of endurance as cheerfully as might be.

In Genoa you heard nothing in the streets but the talk of money. I hailed it as a good omen in Florence, that the two first words which caught my ears were flowers and women (*Fiori* and *Donne*). The night of our arrival we put up at a hotel in a very public street, and were kept awake (as agreeably as illness would let us be) by songs and guitars. It was one of our pleasantest experiences of the south: and, for the moment, we lived in the Italy of books. One performer to a jovial accompaniment sang a song about somebody's fair wife, which set the street in roars of laughter.

From the hotel we went to a lodging in the street of Beautiful Women—Via delle Belle Donne—a

name which it is a sort of tune to pronounce. We there heard one night a concert in the street; and looking out, saw music-stands, books, &c. in regular order, and amateurs performing as in a room. Opposite our lodgings was an inscription on a house, purporting that it was the hospital of the Monks of Vallombrosa. Wherever you turned was music or a graceful memory.

From the Via delle Belle Donne we went to live in the Piazza Santa Croce, in the corner house on the left side of it next to the church of that name, which contains the ashes of Galileo, Michael Angelo, Boccaccio, Macchiavelli, Alfieri, and others. Englishmen call it the Florentine Westminster Abbey, but it has not the venerable look of the Abbey, nor, indeed, of any resemblance at all—but that of a building half-finished; though it is several hundred years old. There are so many of these unfinished old edifices in Florence, owing to decline in the funds left for their completion, that they form a peculiar feature in this otherwise beautiful city, and a whole volume has been devoted to the subject. On the other side of this sepulchre of great men is the monastery, in which Pope Sixtus the Fifth went stooping as if in decrepitude; "looking," as he said afterwards, "for the keys of St. Peter." We lodged in the house of a Greek, who came from the island of Andros, and was called Dionysius; a name which has existed there,

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perhaps, ever since the god who bore it. Our host was a proper Bacchanalian, always drunk, and spoke faster than I ever heard. He had a "fair Andrian" for his mother, old and ugly, whose name was Bella.

The church of Santa Croce would disappoint you as much inside as out, if the presence of the remains of great men did not always cast a mingled shadow of the awful and beautiful over one's thought. Any large space, also, devoted to the purposes of religion disposes the mind to the loftiest of speculations. The vaulted sky out of doors appears small, compared with the opening into immensity represented by that very enclosure,—that larger dwelling than common, entered by a little door. The door is like a grave, and the enclosure like a vestibule of heaven.

Agreeably to our old rustic propensities, we did not stop long in the city. We left Santa Croce to live at Maiano, a village on the slope of one of the Fiesolan hills, about two miles off. It gives its name to one of the earliest of the Italian poets, precursor of the greater Dante, called Dante of Maiano. He had a namesake living on the spot, in the person of a little boy—a terrible rover out of bounds, whom his parents were always shouting for with the apostrophe of "O Dante!" He excelled in tearing his clothes and getting a dirty face and hands. I heard his mother one evening hail his return home with the following welcome:—"O Dante, what a brute beast you

are!" I thought how probable it was, that the Florentine adversaries of the great poet, his namesake, would have addressed their abuser in precisely the same terms, after reading one of his infernal flayings of them in the Lakes of Tartarus. Dante and Alfieri were great favourites with a Hebrew family (jewellers, if I remember), who occupied the ground-floor of the house we lived in, the Villa Morandi, and who partook the love of music in common with their tribe. Their little girls declaimed out of Alfieri in the morning, and the parents led concerts in the garden of an evening. They were an interesting set of people, with marked characters; and took heartily to some specimens which I endeavoured to give them of the genius of Shakspeare. They had a French governess, who, though a remarkably good speaker of English in general, told me one day, in eulogizing the performance of one of the gentlemen who was a player on the bassoon, that "his excellence lay in the *bason*." It was the grandfather of this family whom I have described in another work (*Men, Women, and Books*), as hailed one May morning by the assembled merry-makers of the hamlet in verses which implied that he was the efficient cause of the exuberance of the season.

The manners of this hamlet were very pleasant and cheerful. The priest used to come of an evening, and take a Christian game at cards with his

Hebrew friends. A young Abate would dance round a well with the daughters of the vine-growers, the whole party singing as they footed. I remember the burden of one of the songs,—

"Ne di giorno ne di sera,
Non passiamo la selva nera."
(Night and morn be it understood,
Nobody passes the darksome wood.)

One evening all the young peasantry in the neighbourhood assembled in the hall of the village, by leave of the proprietor (an old custom) and had the most energetic ball I ever beheld. The walls of the room seemed to spin round with the waltz, as though it would never leave off,—the whirling faces all looking grave, hot, and astonished at one another. Among the musicians I observed one of the apprentices of my friend the bookseller, an evidence of a twofold mode of getting money not unknown in England. I recollected his face the more promptly, inasmuch as not many days previous he had accompanied me to my abode with a set of books, and astonished me by jumping on a sudden from one side of me to the other. I asked what was the matter, and he said, "A viper, sir," (una vipera, signore). He seemed to think that an Englishman might as well settle the viper as the bill.

Notwithstanding these amusements at Maiano, I passed a very disconsolate time; yet the greatest com-

fort I experienced in Italy (next to writing a book which I shall mention) was living in that neighbourhood, and thinking, as I went about, of Boccaccio. Boccaccio's father had a house at Maiano, supposed to have been situated at the Fiesolan extremity of the hamlet. That many-hearted writer (whose sentiment outweighed his levity a hundredfold, as a fine face is oftener serious than it is merry) was so fond of the place, that he has not only laid the two scenes of the *Decameron* on each side of it, with the valley which his company resorted to in the middle, but has made the two little streams that embrace Maiano, the Affrico and the Mensola, the hero and heroine of his *Nimphale Fiesolano*. A lover and his mistress are changed into them, after the fashion of Ovid. The scene of another of his works is on the banks of the Mugnone, a river a little distant; and the *Decameron* is full of the neighbouring villages. Out of the windows of one side of our house, we saw the turret of the Villa Gherardi, to which, according to his biographers, his "joyous company" resorted in the first instance. A house belonging to the Macchiavelli was nearer, a little to the left; and farther to the left, among the blue hills, was the white village of Settignano, where Michael Angelo was born. The house is still in possession of the family. From our windows on the other side we saw, close to us, the Fiesole of antiquity and of Milton, the site of the Boccaccio-house before mentioned still closer, the

Decameron's Valley of Ladies at our feet; and we looked over towards the quarter of the Mugnône and of a house of Dante, and in the distance beheld the mountains of Pistoia. Lastly, from the terrace in front, Florence lay clear and cathedralled before us, with the scene of Redi's *Bacchus* rising on the other side of it, and the Villa of Arcetri, illustrious for Galileo. Hazlitt, who came to see me there (and who afterwards, with one of his felicitous images, described the state of mind in which he found me, by saying that I was "moulting"), beheld the scene around us with the admiration natural to a lover of old folios and great names, and confessed, in the language of Burns, that it was a sight to enrich the eyes.

But I stuck to my Boccaccio haunts, as to an old home. I lived with the true human being, with his friends of the *Falcon* and the *Basil*, and my own not unworthy melancholy; and went about the flowering lanes and hills, solitary indeed, and sick to the heart, but not unsustained. In looking back to such periods of one's existence, one is surprised to find how much they surpass many seasons of mirth, and what a rich tone of colour their very darkness assumes, as in some fine old painting. My almost daily walk was to Fiesole, through a path skirted with wild myrtle and cyclamen; and I stopped at the cloister of the Doccia, and sat on the pretty melancholy platform behind it, reading or looking through the pines down to

Florence. In the Valley of Ladies I found some English trees (trees not vine and olive), and even a meadow; and these, while I made them furnish me with a bit of my old home in the north, did no injury to the memory of Boccaccio, who is of all countries, and who finds his home wherever we do ourselves, in love, in the grave, in a desert island.

But I had other friends, too, not far off, English, and of the right sort. My friend, Charles Armitage Brown (Keats's friend, and the best commentator on Shakspeare's Sonnets), occupied for a time the little convent of San Baldassare, near Maiano, where he represented the body corporate of the former possessors, with all the joviality of a comfortable natural piety. The closet in his study, where it is probable the church treasures had been kept, was filled with the humanities of modern literature, not the less Christian for being a little sceptical: and we had a zest in fancying that we discoursed of love and wine in the apartments of the Lady Abbess. I remember I had the pleasure of telling an Italian gentleman there the joke attributed to Sydney Smith, about sitting next a man at table, who had "a seven-parson power;" and he understood it, and rolled with laughter, crying out—"Oh, ma bello! ma bellissimo!" (Beautiful! exquisite!) There, too, I had the pleasure of dining in com-

pany with an English beauty (Mrs. W.), who appeared to be such as Boccaccio might have admired, capable both of mirth and gravity; and she had a child with her that reflected her graces. The appearance of one of these young English mothers among Italian women, looks (to English eyes at least) like domesticity among the passions. It is a pity when you return to England, that the generality of faces do not keep up the charm. You are then too apt to think, that an Italian beauty among English women would look like poetry among the sullens.

Our friend Brown removed to Florence; and together with the books and newspapers, made me a city visitor. I there became acquainted with Landor, to whose genius I had made the *amende honorable* the year before; and with Mr. Kirkup, an English artist, who was poor enough, I fear, neither in purse nor accomplishment to cultivate his profession as he ought to have done; while at the same time he was so beloved by his friends, that they were obliged to get at a distance from him before they could tell him of it. Yet I know not why they should; for a man of a more cordial generosity, with greater delicacy in showing it, I never met with: and such men deserve the compliment of openness. They know how to receive it.

To the list of my acquaintances, I had the honour

of adding Lord Dillon; who, in the midst of an exuberance of temperament more than national, concealed a depth of understanding, and a genuine humanity of knowledge, to which proper justice was not done in consequence. The luxuriant vegetation and the unstable ground diverted suspicion from the ore beneath it. I remember him saying something one evening about a very ill-used description of persons in the London streets, for which Shakspeare might have taken him by the hand; though the proposition came in so startling a shape, that the company were obliged to be shocked in self-defence. The gallant Viscount was a cavalier of the old school of the Meadowses and Newcastles, with something of the O'Neal superadded; and instead of wasting his words upon tyrants or Mr. Pitt, ought to have been eternally at the head of his brigade, charging mercenaries on his war horse, and meditating romantic stories.

When the *Liberal* was put an end to, I had contributed some articles to a new work set up by my brother, called the *Literary Examiner*. Being too ill at Florence to continue those, I did what I could, and had recourse to the lightest and easiest translation I could think of, which was that of Redi's *Bacco in Toscana*. The *Bacco in Toscana* (Bacchus in Tuscany), is a mock-heroical account of the Tuscan wines, put into the mouth of that god, and

delivered in dithyrambics. It is ranked among the Italian classics, and deserves to be so for its style and originality. Bacchus is represented sitting on a hill outside the walls of Florence, in company with Ariadne and his usual attendants, and jovially giving his opinion of the wines, as he drinks them in succession. He gets drunk after a very mortal fashion; but recovers, and is borne away into ecstasy by a draught of Montepulciano, which he pronounces to be the King of Wines.

I was the more incited to attempt a version of this poem, inasmuch as it was thought a choke-pear for translators. English readers asked me how I proposed to render the "famous"

"Mostra aver poco giudizio"—

(a line much quoted); and Italians asked what I meant to do with the "compound words" (which are very scarce in their language). I laughed at the famous "mostra aver," which it required but a little animal spirits to "give as good as it brought;" and I had the pleasure of informing Italians, that the English language abounded in compound words, and could make as many more as it pleased.

Here follows the famous "mostra aver," which is very pleasant. Bacchus is telling his hearers what is good to be taken after Barbarossa wine, if you drink too much of it. He recommends more wine of another sort, and will not hear of tea, coffee, or chocolate:—

"Non fia già, che il Cioccolatte
V'adoprassi, vovero il Tè;
Medicine così fatte
Non saran giammai per me:
Beverei prima il veleno,
Che un bicchier che fosse pieno
Dell'amaro e reo caffè.
Colà tra gli Arabi
E tra i Giannizzeri
Liquor sì ostico,
Sì nero e torbido,
Gli schiavi ingollino.
Giù nel Tartaro,
Giù nell'Erebo,
L'empie Belidi l'inventarono;
E Tesifone, e l'altre Furie
A Proserpina il ministrarono:
E se in Asia il Musulmanno
Se lo cionca a precipizio,
Mostra aver poco giudizio."

Never think of taking chocolate,
Or the physic they call tea;
Med'cines made, ye gods! as they are,
Are no med'cines made for me.
I 'd as lief be serv'd with poison,
As a single cup set eyes on
Of that bitter and guilty stuff ye
Talk of by the name of coffee.
Let the Arabs and the Turks
Count it 'mongst their cruel works:
Foe of mankind, black and turbid,
Let the throats of slaves absorb it.
Down in Tartarus,
Down in Erebus,
'T was the detestable Fifty invented it:
The Furies then took it,
To grind and to cook it,
And to Proserpina all three presented it.

If the Mussulman in Asia
Doats on a beverage so unseemly,
I differ with the man extremely.

Redi was a celebrated naturalist as well as poet. He put an end to the doctrine of equivocal generation. He was physician to the Grand Duke of Tuscany, Cosmo the Third, whom he converted from a corpulent invalid, in the prime of life, into a hale and active survivor till fourscore. His love of wine was in imagination, for he was a water-drinker; but this did not hinder him from writing like the gayest of bacchanals. Probably it made him the gayer; though he knew well enough what melancholy was. His experience of hypochondria had given me a double regard for him. Our "legs" in that matter, and in the gaiety too, were "both of a thickness." A poet, inasmuch as he is a poet at all, that is to say, inasmuch as he has any *œstrus* or fervour in him, has wine in his blood. Redi published his mock-heroic in a quarto volume, filled full of learned and amusing notes. I had the good fortune, when in prison, to find it in a catalogue full of divinity (a proper place): and this catalogue was that of Sion College Library, — the only establishment of the kind which suffered its books to go out of the house, till the London Library was founded;—which I mention in gratitude to the good old institution. May it flourish for ever, like a good example, with

a librarian as fit to be in it as Mr. Christmas. From this volume I solaced myself by copying out a selection of the notes, little thinking I should one day have the pleasure of translating the poem in its native country.

Maiano is mentioned in Redi's poem. He couples it with the house of his friend Salviati.

"Fiesole viva; e seco viva il nome
Del buon Salviati, ed il suo bel Maiano."

Long live Fiesole, green old name,
And with it long life to thy sylvan fame;
Lovely Maiano, lord of dells,
Where my gentle Salviati dwells.

The Salviati family, when I lived there, were still in possession of their old villa. So were the Bellini; the kindred, in all probability, of another of Redi's friends, who was a celebrated anatomist, and who is also mentioned in his poem.

"Good wine's a gentleman;
He speedeth digestion all he can.
No headache hath he; no headache, I say,
For those who talk'd with him yesterday.
If Signor Bellini, besides his apes,
Would anatomize vines, and anatomize grapes,
He'd see, that the heart which makes good wine,
Is made to do good, and very benign.*

* Quando il vino è gentilissimo,
Digeriscesi prestissimo;
E per lui mai non molesta
La spranghetta nella testa:

Besides chocolate, and coffee, and tea, the last of which in Italy is still considered exclusively in a medical point of view (at least when I have asked people to drink it, they have said they were not unwell), Redi is very severe on our English beverages, beer and cider, and upon northern liquors in general. He says,—

"There 's a squalid thing call'd beer:—
The man whose lips that thing comes near,
Swiftly dies; or falling foolish,
Grows at forty old and owlish.
She that in the ground would hide her,
Let her take to English cider;
He who'd have his death come quicker,
Any other northern liquor.
Those Norwegians and those Laps
Have extraordinary taps," &c.*

I cannot say that I tasted many of Redi's Tuscan wines, except in his verses. I forget even the merits

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E far fede ne potria
L'anatomico Bellini,
Se dell'uve, e se de' vini
Far volesse notomia.

* Chi la squallida Cervogia
Alle labre sue congiugne,
Presto muore, o rado giugne
All' età vecchia e barbogia.
Beva il Sidro d' Inghilterra,
Chi vuol gir presto sotterra;
Chi vuol gir presto alla morte,
Le bevande usi del Norte,
Quès Norvegi e quèi Lapponi.
Hanno strani beni

of his king of wines, Montepulciano; but I can bear testimony to the excellence of one of them—Chianti. In his mention of it he denounces the practise of training vines upon poles, instead of growing them on the ground; which is understood, I believe, to be so much the better way, that it is surprising the other mode is resorted to, however superior in look or profuser of bunches.

"True son of the earth is Chianti wine,
Born, on the ground, of a gipsy vine;
Born on the ground for sturdy souls,
And not the lank race of one of your poles.
I should like to see a snake
Get up in August out of a brake,
And fasten with all his teeth and caustic
Upon that sordid villain of a rustic,
Who, to load my Chianti's haunches
With a parcel of feeble bunches,
Went and tied her to one of these poles,—
Sapless sticks without any souls.

Like a king
In his conquering,
Chianti wine with his red flag goes
Down to my heart, and down to my toes:
He makes no noise, he beats no drums,
Yet pain and trouble fly as he comes."*

* . . Vin robusto, che si vanta
D'esser nato in mezzo al Chianti,
E tra sassi
Lo produsse
Per le genti più bevone
Vite bassa, e non broncone.
Bramerei veder trafitto
Da un serpe in mezzo al petto

I translated this poem as well as I could. I added some of Redi's amusing notes, with comments of my own, and a life of the author; and I fancied that, taking these contents together, the novelty of the book would procure it a sale. I believe it fell dead born from the press. Perhaps it was not to be expected that a sufficient number of English readers would interest themselves in liquors not their own, and in times and places with which they had no sympathy. Animal spirits also require to be read by animal spirits; or at least by such a temperament as understands and likes them; and at all events it is desirable for a new book that it should be decently printed, and it is necessary for it that it should be made known. Now my poor dithyrambic, I believe, was not advertised at all; and as Bell's edition of Shakspeare is said to have been the worst edition ever put forth of a British author, so, perhaps, the

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Quell' avaro villanzone,
Che per render la sua vite
Di più grappoli feconda,
Là ne' monti del buon Chianti,
Veramente villanzone,
Maritolla ad un broncone.

Del buon Chianti il vin decrepito,
Maestoso,
Imperioso,
Mi passeggia dentro il core,
E ne scaccia senza strepito
Ogni affanno e ogni dolore.

translation of the *Bacchus in Tuscany* was the worst ever printed. It was mystified with upwards of fifty mistakes. As times are changed, and readers of Italian are grown more numerous, I cannot help thinking, even now, that if a new edition of this volume were put forth, with a portrait of Redi, a vignette of Maiano, and some other such little helps to its right vinous enjoyment, it would find a sufficient number of genial readers to warrant it. But it must absolutely be better printed. To shew what errata were to be had in those times, and how truly mystifying they must have been, I will here give a specimen or two. Instead of "Bacchus's true Indian conquest *was in* the West," the printer said "*warms* the West;" instead of Boccaccio was "*never* close and succinct," Boccaccio was "*ever* close and succinct;" instead of "Phillips's *cyder*," "Phillips's *cydes;*" instead of "priests and students *flitting* about," "priests and students *flirting* about;" instead of a "*poison*," a "*prison;*" instead of "*and* old stony Giggiano," with a capital G (a mountain so called) "*an* old stony giggiano,"—a most perplexing mystery. The author, however, was in a foreign country, and his handwriting, perhaps, as bad as his health. I used to be forced sometimes to hold the back of my head, in order to steady my hand; owing, I believe, to what is called neuralgia. The hand has never failed me but at such times. I can, at this minute, though in

a very bad state of health, hold it forth as steady as a rock.*

The following is an amusing specimen of English printing by an *Italian* compositor. It is a quotation

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* As to Redi's compound words, I had the pleasure, besides translating those in his text (which were too easy for an Englishman to pique himself on rendering), of presenting my Italian friends with the version of a Greek epigram against the sophists, which consists of little else, and of which, in the notes to his poem, he has given us a Latin translation by Joseph Scaliger. Here it is, with the Greek and Latin preceding it:—

Οφρυανασπασιδαι, 'ρινεγκαταπηξιγενειοι,
Σακκογενειοτροφοι, και λοπαδαρπαγιδαι,
Ειματανωπεριβαλλοι, νηλιποκαιβλεπελαιοι,
Νυκτιλαθραιοφαγοι, νυκτιπαραιπλαγιοι,
Μειρακιεξαπαται, και συλλαβοπευσιλαβηται,
Δοξαματαιοσοφοι, ζηταρετησιαδαι.

Silenicaperones, vibrissasperomenti,
Manticobarbicolæ, exterobropatinæ,
Planipedatquelucernitui, suffarcinamicti,
Noctilavernivori, noctidolostudii,
Pullipremoplagii, subtelocaptioricæ,
Rumigeraucupidi, nugicanoricrepi.

Lofty-brow-flourishers,
Nose-in-beard-wallowers,
Bag-and-beard-nourishers,
Dish-and-all-swallowers;
Old-cloak-investitors,
Barefoot-look-fashioners,
Night-private-feasteaters,
Craft-lucubrationers;
Youth-cheaters, word-catchers, vaingloryosòphers;
Such are your seekers of virtue, philosophers.

in a Guide Book, from a celebrated passage in Milton, which shall be given first:—

"Thick as autumnal leaves, which strew the brooks
In Vallombrosa, where th' Etrurian shades,
High over-arch'd, embower."

Not so, says the printer:—

"Thick as autumnal *scheaves* which strew *che* brooks
In Vallombroso, where the *Ehuian* ihades
Stigh over *orch d'embrover.*

At Maiano, I wrote the articles which appeared in the *Examiner*, under the title of the *Wishing Cap.* Probably the reader knows nothing about them; but they contained some germs of a book he may not be unacquainted with, called *The Town*, as well as some articles since approved of in the volume entitled *Men, Women, and Books.* The title was very genuine.

When I put on my cap, and pitched myself in imagination into the thick of Covent Garden, the pleasure I received was so vivid,—I turned the corner of a street so much in the ordinary course of things, and was so tangibly present to the pavement, the shop-windows, the people, and a thousand agreeable recollections which looked me naturally in the face, that sometimes when I walk there now, the impression seems hardly more real. I used to feel as if I actually pitched my soul there, and that spiritual eyes might have seen it shot over from Tuscany into York-street, like a rocket. It is much pleasanter, however, on waking up, to find soul and

body together in one's native land: — yes, even than among thy olives and vines, Boccaccio! I not only missed "the town" in Italy; I missed my old trees—oaks and elms. Tuscany, in point of wood, is nothing but olive-ground and vineyard. I saw there, how it was, that some persons when they return from Italy say it has no wood, and some, a great deal. The fact is, that many parts of it, Tuscany included, has no wood to *speak of;* and it wants larger trees interspersed with the small ones, in the manner of our hedge-row elms. A tree of a reasonable height is a godsend. The olives are low and hazy-looking, like dry sallows. You have plenty of these; but to an Englishman, looking from a height, they appear little better than brushwood. Then there are no meadows, no proper green lanes (at least, I saw none), no paths leading over field and style, no hay-fields in June, nothing of that luxurious combination of green and russet, of grass, wild flowers, and woods, over which a lover of Nature can stroll for hours with a foot as fresh as the stag's; unvexed with chalk, dust, and an eternal public path; and able to lie down, if he will, and sleep in clover. In short (saving, alas! a finer sky and a drier atmosphere, great ingredients in good spirits), we have the best part of Italy in books; and this we can enjoy in England. Give me Tuscany in Middlesex or Berkshire, and the Valley of Ladies

between Harrow and Jack Straw's Castle. The proud names and flinty ruins above the Mensola may keep their distance. Boccaccio shall build a bower for us out of his books, of all that we choose to import; and we will have daisies and fresh meadows besides. An Italian may prefer his own country after the same fashion; and he is right. I knew a young Englishwoman, who, having grown up in Tuscany, thought the landscapes of her native country insipid, and could not imagine how people could live without walks in vineyards. To me, Italy had a certain hard taste in the mouth. Its mountains were too bare, its outlines too sharp, its lanes too stony, its voices too loud, its long summer too dusty. I longed to bathe myself in the grassy balm of my native fields. But I was ill, unhappy, in a perpetual low fever; and critics, in such condition, or in any condition which is not laudatory, should give us a list of the infirmities under which they sit down to estimate what they differ with. What a comfort, by the way, that would be to many an author! What uncongenialities, nay, what incompetencies we should discover! What a relief to us to find that it was "only A's opinion!" or "only B's!" and how we should laugh at him while giving it in his own person, *vivâ voce*, instead of the mysterious body corporate of "We." Nay, how we do laugh,—provided the bookseller's account will let

us,—provided omissions of notice, or commissions of it, have not been the ruin of our "edition!" Thus may Italians laugh at me, should they read my English criticisms on their beautiful country.

Disappointed of transplanting Redi's Italian vines into England, I thought I would try if I could bring over some literature of modern English growth into Italy. I proposed to a Florentine bookseller to set up a quarterly compilation from the English magazines. Our periodical publications are rarely seen in Italy, though our countrymen are numerous. In the year 1825, two hundred English families were said to be resident in Florence. In Rome, visitors, though not families, were more numerous; and the publication, for little cost, might have been sent all over the Peninsula. The plan was to select none but the very best articles, and follow them with an original one commenting upon their beauties, so as to make readers in Italy well acquainted with our living authors. But the Tuscan authorities were frightened.

"You must submit the publication (said my bookseller) to a censorship."

"Be it so."

"But you must let them see every sheet before it goes to press, in order that there may be no religion or politics."

"Very well:—to please the reverend censors, we

will have no religion. Politics also are out of the question."

"Ay, but politics may creep in."

"They shall not."

"Ah, but they may creep in (say the authorities) without your being aware; and then what is to be done?"

"Why, if neither the editor nor the censors are aware, I do not see how any very vivid impression need be apprehended with regard to the public."

"That has a very plausible sound; but how if the censors do not understand English?"

"There, indeed, they confound us. All I can say is, that the English understand the censors, and I see we must drop our intended work."

This was the substance of a discourse which I had with the bookseller, in answer to the communications which he brought me from his government. The prospectus had been drawn out; the bookseller had rubbed his hands at it, thinking of the money which the best writers in England were preparing for him; but he was forced to give up the project. "Ah," said he to me in his broken English, as he sat in winter-time with cold feet and an irritable face, pretending to keep himself warm by tantalizing the tips of his fingers over a little bason of charcoal, "Ah, you are veree happee in England. You can get so much money as you please."

I know not what the Tuscan government would have said to another book which I wrote at Maiano, and which English readers have not yet heard of, at least not publicly; for, though intended for publication, and the least faulty book, perhaps, which I have written, it has hitherto been only privately circulated. It is entitled, *Christianism, or Belief and Unbelief Reconciled;* and contains, among other matters, the conclusions which the author had then come to on points of religious belief and practice. I wrote it, because I was in a state of health which I thought might terminate fatally, and I was anxious before I died to do what good I could, as far as my reflections on those points had, in my opinion, enabled me. I shall say more of it towards the end of this volume. I had the consolation—I hope not the unchristian one—of writing it at a window opposite the dissolved convent of the Doccia; for though I contemplated with pleasure that image of departing superstition,—then a lay abode, beautifully overlooking the country,—the book had any design in the world but that of grieving one gentle heart.

Attached, however, as associations of this nature, and those with Boccaccio and Redi, contributed to make me to my country walks, I often varied them by going into Florence; or rather, I went there whenever the graver part of them became too much for me. I loved Florence, and saw nothing in it but

cheerfulness and elegance. I loved the name; I loved the fine arts and the old palaces; I loved the memories of Pulci and Lorenzo de Medici, the latter of whom I could never consider in any other light than that of a high-minded patron of genius, himself a poet; I loved the good-natured, intelligent inhabitants, who saw fair play between industry and amusement; nay, I loved the government itself, however afraid it was of English periodicals; for it was good-natured also, and could "live and let live," after a certain quiet fashion, in that beautiful bye-corner of Europe, where there were no longer any wars, nor any great regard for the parties that had lately waged them, illegitimate or legitimate.

The reigning family were Austrians, but with a difference, long Italianized, and with no great family affection. One good-natured Grand Duke had succeeded another for several generations; and the liberalism of the first Leopold was still to be felt, in a general way, very sensibly, though it might seem to have lost in some particulars since the triumph of the allies, and the promises broken to the Carbonari.

Talking of Grand Dukes and de Medicis, be it known, before I forget to mention it (so modest am I by nature), that on one of these visits to Florence, and in the house of a Medici himself, I had the happiness of folding to my bosom, with reci-

precal pleasure in our faces, no less a personage than a certain lovely Maddalena de' Medici, daughter of said distinguished individual, and now, at this moment, in all probability, lovelier than ever; seeing, alas! that she was then little more than a baby, just able to express her satisfaction at being noticed by her admirers.

I wish I could equally have admired the famous Venus de' Medici, in whom I expected to find the epitome of all that was charming; for I had been led, by what I thought the popular misrepresentations of her, to trust almost as little to plaster-casts as to engravings. But how shall I venture to express what I felt? how own the disappointment which I shared with the "Smellfungus" of Sterne, instead of the raptures which I had looked for in unison with Sterne himself, and Thomson, and, perhaps, all the travelled connoisseurs of the earth, Smollett alone and Hazlitt excepted?

When the intelligent traveller approaches Florence, when he ascends the top of the gentle mountains that surround it, and sees the beautiful city lying in a plain full of orchards,—what are the anticipations in which he indulges? Not surely those of a Grand Duke, however grand or even good he may be, nor of divers other Grand Dukes that preceded him, nor of the difference between *tables d'hôte*, nor any such local phenomena, eminent in the eyes

of the postilion:—he thinks of the old glories of Florence: of Lorenzo de Medici, of Dante, of Boccaccio, of Michael Angelo, of Galileo, of the river Arno and Fiesole, of the rank which that small city has challenged, by the sole power of wit, among the greatest names of the earth; of the lively and clever generations that have adorned it, playing their music, painting their pictures, and pouring forth a language of pearls; and last, but not least, he thinks of the goddess who still *lives* there—the far-famed Venus de' Medici, triumphing in her worshippers as if no such thing as a new religion had taken place, and attracting adoration from all parts of the earth.

He enters, and worships likewise. I, too, entered and worshipped, prepared to be the humblest of her admirers. I did not even hurry to the gallery as soon as I arrived. I took a respectful time for going properly. When I entered the room, I retained my eyes a little on the objects around her, willing to make my approaches like a devout lover, and to prepare myself for that climax of delight. It seemed too great a pleasure to be vulgarly and abruptly taken. At length I look. I behold, and I worship indeed; but not for the old reasons. How shall I venture to state the new ones? I must make a little further preface, and will take the opportunity of noticing the gallery itself.

The celebrated Florentine Gallery is an oblong,

occupying the upper story of a whole street of government offices. The street is joined at the end, though opening into a portico underneath on the river Arno, so that the gallery runs round the whole of the three sides. The two longer corridors are each 430 feet long (French), the intermediate one 97. They are 11 feet broad, 20 feet high, floored with variegated stucco, and painted on the roof *in fresco.*

The windows are ample, curtained from the sun, and generally opened to admit the air. The whole forms a combination of neatness and richness, of clear and soft light, of silence, firmness, and grace, worthy to be the cabinet of what it contains. These contents are statues, busts, pictures, sarcophagi; the paintings filling the interstices between the sculptures, and occupying the continued space over their heads. The first things you behold on entering the gallery, are busts of Roman Emperors and their kindred.

But these more obvious portions of the gallery are not *all.* These illustrious corridors present certain tempting-looking doors, which excite curiosity, and these doors open into rooms which are the very boudoirs of connoisseurship. 'They contain specimens of the different schools, collections of gems and medals, and select assemblages from the whole artistic treasure. One of them, called the Tribune, little more perhaps than 29 feet in diameter, is a concen-

tration of beauty and wealth. It is an octagon, lighted from above, floored with precious marble, and over-arched with a cupola adorned with mother-o'-pearl. But I knew nothing of all this, till I read it in a book. I saw only the pictures and the statues. Here, among other wonderful things, is the more wonderful Venus of Titian. Here is the Fornarina of Raphael; his Julius the Second, with four other pictures, showing the progress of his hand; the Adoring Virgin of Correggio; the Epiphany of Albert Durer; a master-piece of Vandyke; another of Paul Veronese; another by Domenichino; another by Leonardo da Vinci. In the middle of the room, forming a square, stands the famous Apollo, with his arm over his head, leaning on a tree; the Grinder, or Listening Slave; the Wrestlers; and the Faun Playing the Cymbals. And as the climax of attraction to all this, with the statues and paintings in attendance, elevated by herself, opposite the doorway, and approached by a greater number of pilgrims than are now drawn to Italy by the Virgin herself, presides the goddess of the place, the ancient deity restored and ever young, —the far-famed Venus de' Medici.

"So stands the statue which enchants the world."

Seeing what I saw, and feeling as I did, when I first beheld this renowned production, glittering with the admiration of ages as well as its own lustre, it

was easy to conceive the indignation which the Florentines displayed when they saw it take its departure for France, and the vivacity with which Bonaparte broke out when he spoke of its acquisition. (See Vol. I. p. 150.)

After this second preface, which is another genuine transcript of my feelings on entering the room, I should again be at a loss how to venture upon the opinion I am about to express, if I did not recollect that the *entire* statue is acknowledged not to be antique, and that the very important part which called forth my disappointment is by some *supposed* not to be so. The statue was originally dug up near Tivoli, at Hadrian's Villa, and was then in a broken as well as in a mutilated state. Luckily the divisions were such as to refit easily; but it is confessed that the whole right arm was wanting, and so was part of the left arm from the elbow downwards.

"With the exception of a little bit of the body or so," says the French editor of the *Guide*, "all the rest is evidently antique."

This, it appears, is disputable; but nobody doubts the greater part of the body, and the body is certainly divine. Luckily for me, I approached the statue on the left as you enter the door, so that I first saw it from the point of view which shows it to most advantage. The timid praises which cold northern criticism ventures to bestow upon naked

beauty, are not calculated to do it justice. The good faith with which I speak must warrant me in resorting to the more pictorial allowances and swelling words of the Italians. The really modest will forgive me, at all events; and I am only afraid that the prudish will be disappointed at not having enough to blame. *Hips* and *sides*, however (if they understand such words), will do. We first vulgarize our terms with a coarse imagination, and then are afraid to do justice to what they express. It was not so with our ancient admirers of beauty, the Spensers and Philip Sidneys; and they, I believe, were not worse men than ourselves. It would be difficult nowadays to convey, in English, the impression of the Italian word *fianchi* (flanks) with the requisite delicacy, in speaking of the naked human figure. We use it to mean only the sides of an army, of a fortified place, or of a beast. Yet the words *rilevati fianchi* (flanks in relief) are used by the greatest Italian poets to express a beauty, eminent among all beautiful females who are not pinched and spoilt by modern fashions; and this is particularly the case with the figure which the sculptor presented to his mind in forming the Venus de' Medici. Fielding, in one of his passages about Sophia, would help me out with the rest. But to those who have seen the Venus of Canova, it is sufficient to say, that in all which constitutes the

loveliness of the female figure, the Venus de' Medici is the reverse of that lank and insipid personage. Venus, above all goddesses, ought to be a woman; whereas the statue of Canova, with its straight sides and Frenchified head of hair, is the image (if of anything at all) of Fashion affecting Modesty. The finest view of the Venus de' Medici is a three-quarter one, looking towards the back of the head. Let the statue rest its fame on this. It is perfection; if, indeed, the shoulders are not a thought too broad. But the waist, and all thereunto belonging —I would quote Sir Philip Sidney at once, if I were sure I had none but an audience worthy of him. The feet are very beautiful—round, light, and tender. It is justly said, that there is no cast of the Venus which gives a proper idea of the original. Perhaps the nature of the marble is one of the reasons. It has a warmth and a polish that swims away with the eye; such as what Horace speaks of in the countenance of his mistress—

> "Vultus nimium lubicrus aspici.'
>
> "Looks too slippery to be looked upon."
>
> CREECH.

Alas! not so the face, nor the gesture. When I saw the *face*, all the charms of the body vanished. Thomson thought otherwise—

> "Bashful she bends; her well-taught look aside
> Turns in enchanting guise, where dubious mix

> Vain conscious beauty, a dissembled sense
> Of modest shame, and slippery looks of love.
> The gazer grows enamour'd; and the stone,
> As if exulting in its conquest, smiles."

See the poem of *Liberty*, part the fourth. But Thomson writes like a poet who made what he went to find. I was not so lucky. I do not remember what it was that Smollett, in his unforbid spleen, said of the Venus. Something, if Sterne is to be believed, not very decent. I hope I am not going to behave myself as ill. With all my admiration of Smollett and his masterly writing, I would rather err with the poetical Scotchman, than be right with the prose one; but setting aside the body (which, if Smollett said anything indecent against, I say he spoke in a manner worthy of his friend Peregrine Pickle), I must make bold to say, that I think neither the gesture of the figure modest, nor the face worthy even of the gesture. Yes; perhaps it is worthy of the gesture, for affected modesty and real want of feeling go together; and, to my mind, the expression of the face (not to mince the matter, now I must come to it) is pert, petty, insolent, and fastidious. It is the face of a foolish young woman, who thinks highly of herself, and is prepared to be sarcastic on all her acquaintance.

I cling eagerly to the supposition that the head is not an antique; and, I must add, that if artists are warranted (as they very probably are) in deducing a

necessity of the present position of the hands from the turn of the shoulders, the hands were certainly not in their present finical taste. A different character given to them would make a world of difference in the expression of the figure. It is not to be supposed that the sculptor intended to make a sophisticate pert Venus, such as nobody could admire. It is out of all probability. There is too much sentiment in the very body. On the other hand, the expression is neither graceful and good enough for the diviner aspect of the Goddess of Love, nor sufficiently festive and libertine for the other character under which she was worshipped. It might be said, that the Greek women, in consequence of the education they received, were more famous for the beauty of their persons than for the expression of their faces; that the artist, therefore, copied this peculiarity of his countrywomen; that it might not have been his object to excel in expression of countenance; or that he could not, perhaps, have made a face equal to the figure, his talent not being equally turned for both. But it is said, on the other hand, that the women of Greece, owing to moral causes of some kind, were inferior to the other sex in beauty, so that artists took their models from among those of a certain licensed order, who, strange to say, were the only females that received a good education; and certainly it is *possible* that the Venus

de' Medici may have been a portrait of one of those anomalous personages. The face, however, has the very worst look of meretriciousness, which is want of feeling; and this, we are bound to suppose, would at least have been veiled under a pleasant and more winning aspect. That it may not have been the sculptor's object to render the face worthy of the figure, it is hardly possible to conceive; though it may be conceded that he would have found it difficult to do so, especially in marble. But the question lies, not between a figure divine and a face unequal to it, but between a figure divine and a face altogether unworthy. Apuleius has said, that if Venus herself were bald, she would no longer be Venus. It is difficult not to agree with him. And yet with much more truth might he have said, that Venus could not be Venus without attractiveness of expression. A beautiful figure is not all, nor even half. It is far more requisite to have beauty in the eyes, beauty in the smile, and that graceful and affectionate look of *approach*, or of meeting the approacher half-way, which the Latins expressed by a word taken from the same root as her name, *Venustas*. The cestus was round the waist; but what gave it its power? Winning looks, tenderness, delightful discourse, the whole power of seduction and entertainment, such as Homer has described it, in verses rich as the girdle. Now, there is nothing

of all this in the Venus de' Medici. Her face seems to vilify and to vulgarize all which her person inspires. Even the countenance of Titian's Venus, which hangs on the wall behind the statue, just over its head, as if on purpose to out-do it, succeeds in so doing; and yet this naked figure, though called a Venus, is nothing more I believe, than the portrait of somebody's mistress, not romantically delicate, and waiting till an old woman in the background brings her her clothes to get up. But not to mention that it is an excellent painting, the expression of the face is at least genuine and to the purpose, and the whole figure worthy to be adored in the temple of the Venus Pandemos, if not of the diviner one.

The plaster-cast Venuses in England have often little or no resemblance to the face of the original. They are only insipid. The exquisite turn of the limbs is still less, I fear, to be looked for; but it may be imagined, if you do not see the face.

Upon the whole, I found the busts of the Roman emperors far more interesting than this renowned statue. Julius Cesar leads them, with a thin face, traversed in all directions with wrinkles. I thought I had never beheld such a care-worn countenance. Such was the price he paid for ruling his happier fellow-creatures. Augustus, on the contrary, has quite a prosperous aspect,—healthy, elegant, and composed,—though, if I remember rightly, the ex-

pression was hard. You thought he could easily enough put his sign-manual to the proscription. His daughter Julia (I speak on all these points from memory) has a fat, voluptuous face, and (I think) wore a wig; at all events, her hair was dressed in some high, artificial manner. I think also she had a double chin, though she was far from old. You could well enough fancy her letting Ovid out, at a back staircase. Somebody—Hazlitt, I think—said that the Roman emperors in this gallery had more of an ordinary English look than what we conceive of the Roman; and, if I am not mistaken at this distance of time, I agreed with him. There was the good English look with the good, the dull with the dull, and so on. Domitian had exactly the pert aspect of a footman peering about him in a doorway. The look, however, of the glutton Vitellius was something monstrous. His face was simply vulgar, but he had a throat like that of a pelican. Nero's face it was sad to contemplate. There is a series of busts of him at different periods of his life; one, that of a charming happy little boy; another, that of a young man growing uneasy; and a third, that of the miserable tyrant. You fancied that he was thinking of having killed his mother, and was trying to bully his conscience into no care about it.

After all, I know not whether the most interesting sight in Florence is not a little mysterious bit of

something looking like parchment, which is shewn you under a glass case in the principal public library. It stands pointing towards heaven, and is one of the fingers of Galileo. The hand to which it belonged is supposed to have been put to the torture by the Inquisition, for ascribing motion to the earth; and the finger is now worshipped for having proved the motion. After this, let no suffering reformer's pen misgive him. If his cause be good, justice will be done it some day.

But I must return to Maiano, in order to take leave of it for England; for the fortunes of the *Examiner*, as far as its then proprietors were concerned, had now come to their crisis; and constant anxiety in a foreign land for the very subsistence of my family was not to be borne any longer. I need not enter into some private matters which had tended to produce this aggravation of a public result. Suffice to say, that the author's customary patron—the bookseller—enabled me to move homewards; and that I did so with a joy, which almost took away half my cares.

My last day in Italy was jovial. I had a proper Bacchanalian parting with Florence. A stranger and I cracked a bottle together in high style. He ran against me with a flask of wine in his hand, and divided it gloriously between us. My white waistcoat was drenched into rose colour. It was impos-

sible to be angry with his good-humoured face; so we complimented one another on our joviality, and parted on the most flourishing terms. In the evening I cracked another flask, with equal abstinence of inside. Mr. Kirkup made me a present of a vine-stick. He came to Maiano, with Brown, to take leave of us; so we christened the stick, as they do a seventy-four, and he stood *rod*-father.

We set off next morning at six o'clock. I took leave of Maiano with a dry eye, Boccaccio and the Valley of Ladies notwithstanding. But the grave face of Brown (who had stayed all night, and who was to continue doing us service after we had gone, by seeing to our goods and chattels) was not so easily to be parted with. I was obliged to gulp down a sensation in the throat, such as men cannot very well afford to confess "in these degenerate days," though Achilles and old Lear made nothing of owning it.

But before I quit Italy altogether, I will describe some of our further impressions about it, both physical and moral, and general as well as particular.

You find yourself in Virgil's country the moment you see the lizards running up the walls, and hear the *cicadæ* (now *cicale*) "bursting the bushes with their song." This famous "grasshopper" of Anacreon, as the translators call it, but which is not a grasshopper but a beetle, sitting on the trees, produces his "song" by scraping a hollow part of his

chest with certain muscles. The noise is so loud, as well as incessant, during the heats of the summer-days, as to resemble that of a stocking-manufactory. Travellers in Sicily declare, that while conversing with a friend along a wood, you sometimes cannot be heard for them.

All the insect tribes, good and bad, acquire vigour and size as they get southward. We found, however, but one scorpion in-doors, and he was young. We were looking on him with much interest, and speculating upon his turn of mind, when a female servant quietly took out her scissors, and cut him in two. Her bile, with eating oil and minestra, was as much exalted as his. Scorpions, however, are no very dangerous things in Italy. The gnats are bad enough without them, and even the flies are almost as bad as the gnats. The zanzaliere (the bed-net against the gnats) appeared almost as necessary against the flies, as against the enemy from whom it is named.

But there is one insect which is equally harmless and beautiful. It succeeds the noisy cicala of an evening; and is of so fairy-like a nature and lustre, that it would be almost worth coming into the south to look at it, if there were no other attraction. I allude to the fire-fly. Imagine thousands of flashing diamonds every night powdering the ground, the trees, and the air, especially in the

darkest places, and in the corn-fields. They give at once a delicacy and brilliance to Italian darkness, inconceivable. It is the glow-worm, winged, and flying in crowds. In England it is the female alone that can be said to give light; that of the male, who is the exclusive possessor of the wings, is hardly perceptible. "Worm" is a wrong word, the creature being a real insect. The Tuscan name is lucciola, little-light. In Genoa they call them cæë-belle (chiare-belle), clear and pretty. When held in the hand, the little creature is discovered to be a dark-coloured beetle, but without the hardness or sluggish look of the beetle tribe. The light is contained in the under part of the extremity of the abdomen, exhibiting a dull golden-coloured partition by day, and flashing occasionally by daylight, especially when the hand is shaken. At night the flashing is that of the purest and most lucid fire, spangling the vineyards and olive-trees, and their dark avenues, with innumerable stars. Its use is not known. In England, and I believe here, the supposition is that it is a signal of love. It affords no perceptible heat, but is supposed to be phosphoric. In a dark room, a single one is sufficient to flash a light against the wall. I have read of a lady in the West Indies who could see to read by the help of three under a glass, as long as they chose to accommodate her. During our abode in Genoa a few of them were

commonly in our rooms all night, going about like little sparkling elves. It is impossible not to think of something spiritual in seeing the progress of one of them through a dark room. You only know it by the flashing of its lamp, which takes place every three or four inches apart, sometimes oftener, thus marking its track in and out of the apartment, or about it. It is like a little fairy taking its rounds. These insects remind us of the lines in Herrick, inviting his mistress to come to him at night-time, and they suit them still better than his English ones:—

> "Their lights the glow-worms lend thee;
> The shooting-stars attend thee;
> And the elves also,
> Whose little eyes glow,
> Like the sparks of fire, befriend thee."

To me, who when I was in Italy passed more of my time, even than usual, in the ideal world, the spiritual-looking little creatures were more than commonly interesting. Shelley used to watch them for hours. I looked at them, and wondered whether any of the particles he left upon earth helped to animate their loving and lovely light. The last fragment he wrote, which was a welcome to me on my arrival from England, began with a simile taken from their dusk look and the fire underneath it, in which he found a likeness to his friend. They had then just made their appearance for the season.

There is one circumstance respecting these fire-flies, quite as extraordinary as any. There is no mention of them in the ancient poets. Now, of all insects, even southern, they are, perhaps, the most obvious to poetical notice. It is difficult to conceive how any poet, much less a pastoral or an amatory poet, could help speaking of them; and yet they make their appearance neither in Greek nor Latin verse, neither in Homer, nor Virgil, nor Ovid, nor Anacreon, nor Theocritus. The earliest mention of them, with which I am acquainted, is in Dante (*Inferno*, canto 21), where he compares the spirits in the eighth circle of hell, who go about swathed in fire, to the "lucciole" in a rural valley of an evening. A truly saturnine perversion of a beautiful object. Does nature put forth a new production now and then, like an author? Or has the glow-worm been exalted into the fire-fly by the greater heat of the modern Italian soil, which appears indisputable? The supposition is, I believe, that the fire-fly was brought into Europe from the New World.

With respect to wood in Italy, olive-trees in particular, travellers hearing so much of the latter, and accustomed to their pickled fruit, are generally disappointed at sight of them. Whether my enthusiasm was borne out by judgment, I cannot say, but I liked them, at least in combination. An olive-

tree by itself is hardly to be called handsome, unless it is young, in which state it is very much so, quite warranting Homer's comparison with it of the slain youth. It is then tender-looking and elegant. When old the leaves are stiff, hard, pointed, willow-like, dark above, and of a light leathern colour underneath; the trunk slight, dry-looking, crooked; and it almost always branches off into a double stem at a little distance from the ground. A wood of olive-trees looks like a huge hazy bush, more light than dark, and glimmering with innumerable specks, which are the darker sides of the leaves. When they are in fruit they seem powdered with myriads of little black balls. My wife said, that olive trees looked as if they only grew by moonlight; which gives a better idea of their light, faded aspect, than a more prosaical description.

The pine-tree is tall, dark, and comparatively branchless, till it spreads at top into a noble, solid-looking head, wide and stately. It harmonizes as beautifully with extended landscape, as architectural towers, or as ships at sea.

The cypress is a poplar in shape, but more sombre, stately, and heavy; not to be moved by every flippant air. It is of a beautiful dark colour, and contrasts admirably with trees of a rounder figure. Two or three cypress-trees by the side of a white or yellow cottage, slated and windowed like our

new cottage-houses near London, the windows often without glass, are alone sufficient to form a Tuscan picture, and constantly remind you that you are at a distance from home.

The consumption, by the way, of olive oil is immense. It is probably no mean exasperator of Italian bile. The author of an Italian Art of Health approves a moderate use of it, both in diet and medicine; but says, that as soon as it is cooked, fried, or otherwise abused, it inflames the blood, disturbs the humours, irritates the fibres, and produces other effects very superfluous in a stimulating climate. The notoriousness of the abuse makes him cry out, and ask how much better it would be to employ this pernicious quantity of oil in lighting the streets and roads. He thinks it necessary, however, to apologize to his countrymen for this apparent inattention to their pecuniary profits, adding, that he makes amends by diverting them into another channel. I fear the two ledgers would make a very different show of profit and loss: not to mention, that unless the oil were consecrated, or the lamps hung very high, it would assuredly be devoured. We had no little difficulty in keeping the servants from disputing its food with our lamp-light. Their lucubrations were of a more internal nature than ours.

"The rather thou,
Celestial *oil*, shine inwards."

I was told that the olive trees grew finer and finer as you went southwards.

The chestnut trees are very beautiful; the spiky-looking branches of leaves, long, and of a noble green, make a glorious show as you look up against the intense blue of the sky. Is it a commonplace to say that the *castanets* used in dancing, evidently originated in the nuts of this tree, *castagnette?* They are made in general, I believe, of cockle-shells, or an imitation of them; but the name renders their vegetable descent unequivocal. It is pleasant to observe the simple origin of pleasant things. Some loving peasants, time immemorial, fall dancing under the trees: they pick up the nuts, rattle them in their hands; and behold (as the Frenchman says) the birth of the accompaniment of the fandango.

Thus much for insects and trees. Among the human novelties that impress a stranger in Italy, I have not before noticed the vivacity prevalent among all classes of people. The gesticulation is not French. It has an air of greater simplicity and sincerity, and has more to do with the eyes and expression of countenance. But after being used to it, the English must look like a nation of scorners and prudes. When serious, the women walk with a certain piquant stateliness, the same which impressed the ancient as well as modern poets of Italy, Virgil in particular; but it has no haughtiness. You might

imagine them walking up to a dance, or priestesses of Venus approaching a temple. When lively, their manner out of doors is that of our liveliest women within. If they make a quicker movement than usual, if they recognise a friend, for instance, or call out to somebody, or despatch somebody with a message, they have all the life, simplicity, and unconsciousness of the happiest of our young women, who are at ease in their gardens or parks.

On becoming intimate with Genoa, I found that it possesses multitudes of handsome women; and what surprised me, many of them with beautiful northern complexions. But an English lady told me, that for this latter discovery I was indebted to my short sight. This is probable. I have often, I confess, been in raptures at faces that have passed me in London, whose only faults were being very coarse and considerably bilious. It is not desirable, however, to have a Brobdingnagian sight; and where the mouth is sweet and the eyes intelligent, there is always the look of beauty with a right observer. Now, I saw heaps of such faces in Genoa. The superiority of the women over the men was indeed remarkable, and is to be accounted for perhaps by the latter being wrapt and screwed up in money-getting. Yet it is just the reverse, I understand, at Naples; and the Neapolitans are accused of being as sharp at a bargain as anybody. What is certain, however, is, that

in almost all parts of Italy, gentility of appearance is on the side of the females. The rarity of a gentlemanly look in the men is remarkable. The commonness of it among women of all classes is equally so. The former was certainly not the case in old times, if we are to trust the portraits handed down to us; nor, indeed, could it easily have been believed, if left upon record. What is the cause, then, of this extraordinary degeneracy? Is it, after all, an honourable one to the Italians? Is it that the men, thinking of the moral and political situation of their country, and so long habituated to feel themselves degraded, acquire a certain instinctive carelessness and contempt of appearance; while the women, on the other hand, more taken up with their own affairs, with the consciousness of beauty, and the flattery which is more or less paid them, have retained a greater portion of their self-possession and esteem? The alteration, whatever it is owing to, is of the worst kind. The want of gentility is not supplied, as it so often is with us, by a certain homely simplicity and manliness, quite as good in its way, and better, where the former does not include the better part of it. The appearance, to use a modern cant phrase, has a certain *raffishness* in it, like that of a suspicious-looking fellow in England, who lounges about with his hat on one side, and a flower in his mouth. Nor is it confined to men in trade, whether high or low;

though at the same time I must observe, that all men, high or low (with the exceptions, of course, that take place in every case), are given to pinching and saving, keeping their servants upon the lowest possible allowance, and eating as little as need be themselves, with the exception of their favourite *minestra,* of which I will speak presently, and which being a cheap as well as favourite dish, they gobble in sufficient quantity to hinder their abstinence in other things from being regarded as the effect of temperance. In Pisa, the great good of life was a hot supper; but at Pisa and Genoa both, as in "the city" with us, if you overheard anything said in the streets, it was generally about money. *Quotrini, soldi,* and *lire,* were discussing at every step. A stranger, full of the Italian poets and romances, is surprised to find the southern sunshine teeming with this northern buzz. One thinks sometimes that men would not know what to do with their time, if it were not for that succession of hopes and fears, which constitutes the essence of trade. It looks like a good-humoured invention of nature to save the major part of mankind from getting tired to death with themselves; but, in truth, it is a necessity of progression. All mankind must be fused together, before they know how to treat one another properly, and to agree upon final good. Prince Albert's project for next year is a great lift in this direction. It

was a most happy thought for combining the ordinary and extraordinary interests of the world.

One of the greatest causes of the deterioration of the modern Italian character, has been the chicanery, sensuality, falsehood, worldliness, and petty feeling of all sorts, exhibited by the Court of Rome. Mazzini has denounced it in eloquence, of which the earth has not yet seen the result; however extraordinary its consequences have been already in the events at Rome. But the same things were talked of when I was in Italy, and the truth very freely uttered.

The Italians owned, that for centuries they had been accustomed to see the most exalted persons among them, and a *sacred* court, full of the pettiest and most selfish vices; that, while they had instinctively lost their respect for those persons, they had, nevertheless, beheld them the most flourishing of their countrymen; and that they had been taught, by their example, to make such a distinction between belief and practice, as would startle the saving grace of the most lawless of Calvinists. From what I saw myself (and I would not mention it, if it had not been corroborated by others who resided in Italy for years) there was a prevailing contempt of truth in the country, that would have astonished even an oppressed Irishman. It formed an awful comment upon those dangers of *catechising* people into insincerity, which Bentham pointed out in his *Church-of-*

Englandism. We in England are far enough, God knows, from this universality of evil yet; and some of the most conscientious of our clergy themselves have lately been giving remarkable indication of their disinterested horror on the subject. May such writers, and such readers of them, always be found to preserve us from it. In Shelley's preface to the tragedy of the *Cenci*, which was written at Rome, the religious nature of this profanation of truth is pointed out with equal acuteness and eloquence. I have heard instances of falsehood, not merely in shops, but among "ladies and gentlemen," so extreme, so childish, and apparently so unconscious of wrong, that the very excess of it, however shocking in one respect, relieved one's feelings in another. It shewed how much might be done by proper institutions, to exalt the character of a people who are by nature so ingenuous. But received Italian virtues, under their present governments, consist in being catholic (that is to say, in going to confession), in not being "taken in" by others, and in taking in everybody else. Persons employed to do the least or the greatest jobs, will alike endeavour to cheat you through thick and thin. Such, at least, was the case when I was in Italy. It was a perpetual warfare, in which you were obliged to fight in self-defence. If you paid anybody what he asked you, it never entered into his imagination that you did it from

anything but folly. You were pronounced a *minchione* (a ninny), one of their greatest terms of reproach. On the other hand, if you battled well through the bargain, a perversion of the natural principle of self-defence led to a feeling of respect for you. Dispute might increase; the man might grin, stare, threaten; might pour out torrents of argument and of "injured innocence," as they always do; but be firm, and he went away equally angry and admiring. Did anybody condescend to take them in, the admiration as well as the anger was still in proportion, like that of the gallant knights of old when they were beaten in single combat.

An English lady told us a story which will show the spirit of this matter at once. A friend of hers at Pisa was in the habit of dealing with a man, whose knaveries forced her to keep a reasonable eye to her side of the bargain. She said to this man one day, "Ah, so-and-so, no doubt you think me a great *minchione*." The man, at this speech, put on a look of the sincerest deference and respect; and in a tone of deprecation, not at all intended for a joke, replied, "*Minchione! No! E gran furba lei.*"—("You a ninny! Oh no, ma'am: *you* are a *great thief!*") This man, to be sure, was a Jew: but then what dealer in Italy was not? The Jews, like Shylock, might have pronounced the character to be Christian, from its commonness in that Christian land. "Christian,"

with a Jew, might have been as strong a term of money-dealing reproach, as Jew was with Christian.

They say, that Jews could not find a living in Genoa. I knew of one, however, who both lived and got fat. I asked him one day to direct me to somebody who dealt in a particular article. He did so; adding, in an under tone, and clapping his finger against his nose, "He 'll ask you such and such a sum for it; but take care you don't pay it." The love of getting and saving pervaded all classes of the community, the female part, however, I have no doubt, much less than the male. The love of ornament, as well as a more generous passion, interfered. The men seemed to believe in nothing but the existence of power; and as they could not attain to it in its grander shapes, they did all they could to get it in its meanest. The women retained a better and more redeeming faith; and yet everything was done to spoil them. The famous order of things called *Cicisbeism* is the consequence of a state of society more inconsistent than itself, though less startling to the habits of the world; but it was managed in a foolish manner; and, strange to say, it was almost as gross, more formal, and quite as hypocritical as what it displaced. It is a stupid system. The poorer the people, the less, of course, it takes place among them; but as the husband, in all cases, has the most to do for his family, and is

the person least cared for, he is resolved to get what he can before marriage; so a vile custom prevails among the poorest, by which no girl can get married, unless she brings a certain dowry. Unmarried females are also watched with exceeding strictness; and in order to obtain at once a husband and freedom, every nerve is strained to get this important dowry. Daughters scrape up, and servants pilfer for it. If they were not obliged to ornament themselves, as a help towards their object, I do not know whether even the natural vanity of youth would not be sacrificed, and girls hang out rags as a proof of their hoard, instead of the "outward and visible sign" of crosses and ear-rings. Dress, however, disputes the palm with saving; and as a certain consciousness of their fine eyes and their natural graces survives everything else among southern womankind, English people have no conception of the high hand with which the humblest females in Italy carry it at a dance or an evening party. Hair dressed up, white gowns, satins, flowers, fans, and gold ornaments, all form a part of the glitter of the evening, and all, too, amidst as great, and perhaps as graceful a profusion of compliments and love-making as takes place in the most privileged ball-rooms. Yet it is twenty to one that nine out of ten persons in the room have dirty stockings on, and shoes out at heel. Nobody thinks of saving

up articles of that description; and they are too useful, and not showy enough, to be cared for *en passant*. Therefore Italian girls may often enough be well compared to flowers; with head and bodies all ornament, their feet are in the earth; and thus they go nodding forth for sale, "growing, blowing, and all alive." A foolish English servant whom we brought out with us, fell into an absolute rage of jealousy at seeing my wife give a crown of flowers to a young Italian servant, who was going to a dance. The latter, who was of the most respectable sort, and looked as lady-like as you please when dressed, received the flowers with gratitude, though without surprise; but English and Italian both were struck speechless, when, in addition to the crown, my wife presented the latter with a pair of her own shoes and stockings. Doubtless, they were the triumph of the evening. Next day we heard accounts of the beautiful dancing;—of Signor F., the English valet, opening the ball with the handsome chandler's-shopkeeper, &c., and our poor countrywoman was ready to expire.

As the miscellaneous poetry of Alfieri is little known in England, I will conclude this account of Italian love of money with the commencement of a satire of his on the subject. He does not spare the English; though he would have found some distinction, I trust, between us and the Dutch in this

matter, could he have heard the objections made the other day to Austrian and Russian loans. The close of the passage presents a very ludicrous image.

E in te pur, d'ogni lucro Idolo ingordo,
Nume di questo secolo borsale,
Un pocolin la penna mia quì lordo:

Ch'ove oggi tanto, oltre il dover, prevale
Quest' acciecato culto, onde ti bei,
Dritt' è, che ti saetti alcun mio strale.

Figlio di mezza libertade, il sei;
Nè il niego io già; ma in un mostrarti padre
Vo' di servaggio doppio e d'usi rei.

Ecco, ingombri ha di prepotenti squadre
La magra Europa i mari tutti, e mille
Terre farà di pianto e di sangue adre.

Sian belligere genti, o sian tranquille,
Abbiano o no metalli, indaco, o pepe,
Di selve sieno o abitator de ville,

Stuzzicar tutti densi, ovunque repe
Quest' insetto tirannico Européo,
Per impinguar le sua famelich' epe.

Stupidi e inguisti, noi sprezziam l'Ebreo,
Che compra e vende, e vende e compra, e vende;
Ma siam ben noi popol più vile e reo.

Che, non contenti a quanto il suol ci rende,
Dell' altrui ladri ove il furar sia lieve,
Facciam pel globo tutto a chi più prende.

Taccio del sangue American, cui beve
L'atroce Ispano; e il vitto agl' Indi tolto
Dall' Anglo, che il suo vitto agl' Indi deve.

Se in fasce orrende al nascer suo ravvolto
Mostrar volessi il rio commercio, or fora
Il mio sermone (e invan) prolisso molto.

Basta ben sol, che la sua infamia d'ora
Per mè si illustri, appalesando il come
L'iniqua Europa sue laidezze indora.

Annichillate, impoverite, o dome
Par lei le genti di remote spiagge,
Di alloro no, di Báccalà le chiome,

Orniamle," &c. &c.

Yes, glutton of the land and sea,
Our pursy age's deity,
I'll dirt my pen a while with thee.

For since this gloating in a purse,
Which blinds mankind, grows worse and worse,
'Tis fit I smite thee with a verse.

Half-freedom's child, I know thou art:
I'll prove thee father, ere we part,
Of twofold slavery and no heart.

Lo, dry-drawn Europe sends her brood
Of traders out, like a new flood,
To sow the earth with tears and blood.

Whether a land's at war or peace,
Produces metals, tops, or teas,
Or lives in towns, or villages,

This vermin, mightiest thing alive,
Makes them all herd, and crowd, and drive,
To fatten up it's hungry hive.

Unjust and stupid, we despise
The Jew that buys, and sells, and buys,
As if we acted otherwise!

Nay, we do worse; for not content,
Like other thieves, with a home rent,
We rob on every continent.

I pass the Americans that bled
For Spain's fierce thirst; and English bread
Torn from the slaves it should have fed:

Were I to track through all his woes
The monster to his swaddling clothes,
Where I should end, God only knows.

Enough for me, if I can tear
The mask off now, and show the care
Hag Europe takes to be thought fair.

How should we crown her, having trod
Whole nations down for this her god?
With laurel? No,—with salted cod.

This species of dried fish being greatly in request in Catholic countries, the image becomes very ludicrous to an Italian. Were satirists to make coins as well as verses, a head of Catholic Europe some centuries hence, with a crown of dried fish on it, would puzzle the antiquaries.

One anti-climax more. If Italy is famous at present for any two things, it is for political uneasiness and *minestra.** Wherever you find shops, you see baskets full of a yellow stuff, made up in long stripes like tape, and tied up in bundles. This is the main compound of *minestra*, or, to use the Neapolitan term, it is our now growing acquaintance, *maccaroni*. Much of it is naturally of a yellowish colour, but the Genoese dye it deeper

* I used to think that *cicisbeism* was its main distinction; but young Italy insists that it is going out of fashion; and, as Italians ought to know more about the subject than I do, I shall not let certain spectacles that were shewn me in their country, pretend to refute it.

with saffron. When made into a soup it is called *minestra,* and mixed sometimes with meat, sometimes with oil or butter, but always, if it is to be had, with grated cheese. An Italian, reasonably to do in the world, has no notion of eating anything plain. If he cannot have his bit of roast and boiled, and, above all, his minestra and his oil, he is thrown out of all his calculations, physical and moral. He has a great abstract respect for fasting; but he struggles hard to be relieved from it. He gets, whenever he can, what is called an "indulgence." The Genoese in particular, being but Canaanites or borderers in Italy, and accustomed to profane intercourse by their maritime situation, as well as to an heterodox appetite by their industry and sea air, are extremely restive on the subject of fasting. They make pathetic representations to the Archbishop respecting beef and pudding, and allege their health and their household economies. Fish is luckily dear. I have seen in a Genoese Gazette, an extract from the circular of the Archbishop respecting the Lent indulgences. "The Holiness of Our Lord," he says (for so the Pope is styled), "has seen with the greatest displeasure, that the ardent desire which he has always cherished, of restoring the ancient rigour of Lent, is again rendered of no effect by representations which he finds it impossible to resist. He therefore

permits the inhabitants of the Archbishop's diocese to make "one meal a day of eggs and white-meats (latticini) during Lent; and to such persons as have really need of it, he allows the use of flesh:" but he adds, that this latter permission "leaves a heavy load on his conscience," and that he positively forbids the promiscuous use of flesh and fish. I must add, for my part, I thought the Pope had reason in this roasting of eggs. In all countries the devil (to speak after the received theory of good and ill) seems to provide for a due diminution of health and happiness by something in the shape of meat and drink. The northern nations exasperate their bile with beer, the southern with oil, and all with butter and pastry. I would swear, that Dante was a great eater of "fries." Poor Lord Castlereagh had had his buttered toast served up for breakfast the day he killed himself; a very small looking irritant, it is true, for so great a catastrophe; but not the less likely for that. If wars have been made, and balances of power overturned, by a quarrel about a pair of gloves, or the tap of a fan from a king's mistress, it is little to expedite the death of a minister by teazing his hypochondres with fried butter. But this has been noticed before.

As to the political uneasiness, I should have so much to say about it, if I entered upon the subject,

that I dare but occasionally allude to it in these volumes. It would require a volume to itself. The whole three volumes, however,—nay, all volumes which are now written,—may be said to be about it, inasmuch as they concern the transition state of the human mind. I shall advert again to the religious part of the subject before I conclude.

Meantime, I shall only say that Italy is a wonderful nation, always at the head of the world in some respect, great or small, and equally full of life. Division among its children is its bane; and Mazzini's was the best note that has been struck in its favour in modern times, because he struck it at Rome, in the place of the very Pope, and thus gave it the best chance of rallying under one summons. Heaven forgive the French for the shameless vanity of their interference! for it has delayed, under the most unwarrantable circumstances, what must assuredly take place before long, as far as priests and priestly government are concerned. The poor good Pope can no more keep it down, than he could tread out a volcano with his embroidered slippers.

CHAPTER XXII.

RETURN TO ENGLAND.

Travelling by vettura.—The driver.—The Apennines.—Le Maschere.—Covigliaio.—Pietra Mala.—Poggioli.—Story of the Ants.—Scepticism generated in postilions by travelling.—Bologna.—Modena.—Contrasted character of their inhabitants.—Parma.—Piacenza.—Asti and Alfieri.—The Po and the Alps.—Poirino.—Prudent friars.—Turin.—French and Italian dancers.—Sant-Ambrogio.—Ancient and Modern Italy.—Passage of the Alps.—Savoy.—Lanslebourg.—Chambéry and Rousseau.—Lyons and Auxerre.—Statue of Louis the Fourteenth.—Mont Blanc.—Paris.—Place of the guillotine.—Book-stalls.—French people.—French, Italian, and English women.—Arrival in England.

On our return from Italy to England, we travelled not by post, but by *vettura;* that is to say, by easy stages of thirty or forty miles a day, in a travelling carriage; the box of which is turned into a chaise, with a calash over it. It is drawn by three horses, occasionally assisted by mules. We paid about eighty-two guineas English, for which some ten of us (counting as six, because of the children) were to be taken to Calais; to have a breakfast and dinner every day on the road; to be provided with

five beds at night, each containing two persons; and to rest four days during the journey, without farther expense, in whatever places and portions of time we thought fit. Our breakfast was to consist of coffee, bread, fruit, milk, and eggs (plenty of each), and our dinner of the four indispensable Italian dishes, something roast, something boiled, something fried, and what they call an *umido*, which is a hash, or something of that sort; together with vegetables, wine, and fruit. Care, however, must be taken in these bargains, that the vetturino does not crib from the allowance by degrees, otherwise the dishes grow fewer and smaller; meat disappears on a religious principle, it being *magro* day, on which "nothing is to be had;" and the vegetables, adhering to their friend the meat in his adversity, disappear likewise. The reason of this is, that the vetturino has two conflicting interests within him. It is his interest to please you in hope of other custom; and it is his interest to make the most of the sum of money which his master allows him for expenses. Withstand, however, any change at first, and good behaviour may be reckoned upon. We had as pleasant a little Tuscan to drive us as I ever met with. He began very handsomely; but finding us willing to make the best of any little deficiency, he could not resist the temptation of giving up the remoter interest for the nearer one. We found our profusion

diminish accordingly; and at Turin, after cunningly asking us, whether we cared to have an inn not of the very highest description, he brought us to one of which it could only be said that it was not of the very lowest. The landlord showed us into sordid rooms on a second story. I found it necessary to be base and make a noise; upon which little Gigi looked frightened, and the landlord became slavish, and bowed us into his best apartments. We had no more of the same treatment.

Our rogue of a driver had an excellent temper, and was as honest a rogue, I will undertake to say, as ever puzzled a formalist. He made us laugh with his resemblance to Lamb, whose countenance, a little jovialized, he engrafted upon an active little body and pair of legs, walking about in his jack-boots as if they were pumps. But a man must have some great object in life, to carry him so many times over the Alps: and this, of necessity, is money. We could have dispensed easily enough with some of the fried and roasted; but to do this would have been to subject ourselves to other diminutions. Our bargain was reckoned a good one. Gigi's master said (believe him who will) that he could not have afforded it, had he not been sure, at that time of the year, that somebody would take his coach back again; such is the multitude of persons that come to winter in Italy.

We were told to look for a barren road from

Florence to Bologna, but were agreeably disappointed. The vines, indeed, and the olives disappeared; but this was a relief to us. Instead of these, and the comparatively petty ascents about Florence, we had proper swelling Apennines, valley and mountain, with fine sloping meadows of green, interspersed with wood.

We stopped to refresh ourselves at noon at an inn called Le Maschere, where there was an elegant prospect, a mixture of nature with garden ground; and we slept at Covigliaio, where three tall buxom damsels waited upon us, who romped during supper with the men-servants. One of them had a better tone in speaking than the others, upon the strength of which she stepped about with a jaunty air in a hat and feathers, and "did the amiable." A Greek came in with a long beard, which he poked into all the rooms by way of investigation; as he could speak no language but his own. I asked one of the girls why she looked so frightened; upon which she shrugged her shoulders and said, "*Oh Dio!*" as if Bluebeard had come to put her in his seraglio.

Our vile inn knocked us up; and we were half-starved. Little Gigi, on being remonstrated with, said that he was not aware till that moment of its being part of his duty, by the agreement, to pay expenses during our days of stopping. He had not looked into the agreement till then! The rogue!

So we lectured him, and forgave him for his good temper; and he was to be very honest and expensive for the rest of the journey.

Next morning we set off at five o'clock, and passed a volcanic part of the Apennines, where a flame issues from the ground. We thought we saw it. The place is called Pietra Mala (Evil Rock). Here we enter upon the Pope's territories; as if his Holiness was to be approached by an infernal door.

We refreshed at Poggioli, in sight of a church upon a hill, called the Monte dei Formicoli (Ant-Hill). Sitting outside the inn-door on a stone, while the postilion sat on another, he told us of an opinion which prevailed among travellers respecting this place. They reported, that on a certain day in the year, all the ants in the neighbourhood come to church in the middle of the service, and die during the celebration of the mass. After giving me this information, I observed him glancing at me for some time with a very serious face, after which he said abruptly, "Do you believe this report, signore?" I told him, that I was loath to differ with what he or any one else might think it proper to believe; but if he put the question to me as one to be sincerely answered,—

"Oh, certainly, signore."

"Well, then, I do not believe it."

"No more," said little Gigi, "do I."

I subsequently found my postilion very sceptical

on some highly Catholic points, and he accounted for it like a philosopher. Seeing that he made no sign of reverence in passing the images of the Virgin and Child, I asked him the reason?

"Sir," said he, "I have travelled."

Those were literally his words. (Ho viaggiato, signore.) He manifested, however, no disrespect for opinions on which most believers are agreed; though whenever his horses vexed him, he poured forth a series of the most blasphemous execrations which I ever heard. Indeed, I had never heard any at all resembling them; though I was told they were not uncommon with persons unquestionably devout. He abused the divine presence in the sacrament. He execrated the body and——but I must not repeat what he said, for fear of shocking the reader and myself. Nevertheless, I believe he did it all in positive innocence and want of thought, repeating the words as mere words which he heard from others all his life, and to which he attached none of the ideas which they expressed. When a person d—ns another in English, he has no real notion of what he condemns him to; and I believe our postilion had as little when he devoted the objects of his worship to malediction. He was very kind to the children, and took leave of us at the end of our journey in tears.

The same evening we got to Bologna, where we finished for the present with mountains. The best

streets in Bologna are furnished with arcades, very sensible things, which we are surprised to miss in any city in a hot country. They are to be found, more or less, as you travel northwards. The houses were all kept in good-looking order, owing, I believe, to a passion which the Bolognese have for a gorgeous anniversary, against which everything, animate and inanimate, puts on its best. I could not learn what it was. Besides tapestry and flowers, they bring out their pictures to hang in front of the houses. Many cities in Italy disappoint the eye of the traveller. The stucco and plaster outside the houses gets worn, and, together with the open windows, gives them a squalid and deserted appearance. But the name is always something. If Bologna were nothing of a city, it would still be a fine sound and a sentiment; a thing recorded in art, in poetry, in stories of all sorts.

We passed next day over a flat country, and dined at Modena, which is neither so good-looking a city, nor so well sounding a recollection as Bologna; but it is still Modena, the native place of Tassoni. I went to the cathedral to get sight of the *Bucket* (La Secchia) which is hung up there, but found the doors shut, and a very ugly pile of building. The lions before the doors looked as if some giant's children had made them in sport; wretchedly sculptured, and gaping as if in agony at their bad legs. It was a

disappointment to me not to see the Bucket. The poem called the *Rape of the Bucket* (La Secchia Rapita), next to Metastasio's address to Venus, is my oldest Italian acquaintance; and I reckoned upon saying to the subject of it, "Ah, ha! There you are!" Pope imitated the title of this poem in his *Rape of the Lock;* and Dryden confessed to a young critic, that he himself knew the poem, and had made use of it. The bucket was a trophy taken from the Modenese by their rivals of Bologna, during one of the petty Italian wars.

There is something provoking, and yet something fine too, in flitting in this manner from city to city. You are vexed at not being able to stop and see pictures, &c.; but you have a sort of royal taste of great pleasures in passing. The best thing one can do to get at the interior of anything in this hurry, is to watch the countenances of the people. I thought that the aspects of the Bolognese and Modenese people singularly answered to their character in books. What is more singular, is the extraordinary difference and nationality of aspect in the people of two cities, at so little distance from one another. The Bolognese have a broad steady look, not without geniality and richness. You can imagine them to give birth to painters. The Modenese are crusty-looking and carking, with a narrow mouth, and a dry twinkle at the corner

of the eyes. They are critics and satirists on the face of them. For my part I never took very kindly to Tassoni, for all my young acquaintance with him; and in the war which he has celebrated, I was henceforward, whatever I was before, decidedly for the Bolognese.

On the 12th of September, after dining at Modena, we slept at Reggio, where Ariosto was born. His father was captain of the citadel. Boiardo, the poet's worthy precursor (in some respects, I think, his surpasser), was born at Scandiano, not far off. I ran, before the gates were shut, to get a look at the citadel, and was much the better for not missing it. Poets leave a greater charm than any men upon places they have rendered famous, because they sympathize more than any other men with localities, and identify themselves with the least beauty of art or nature,—a turret or an old tree. The river Ilissus at Athens is found to be a sorry brook; but it runs talking for ever of Plato and Sophocles.

At Parma, I tore my hair mentally at not being able to see the Correggios. Piacenza pleased us to be in it, on account of the name; but a list of places in Italy is always like a set of musical tones. Parma, Piacènza, Voghèra, Tortòna, Felizàna,—sounds like these convert a road-book into a music-book.

At Asti, a pretty place, with a "west-end" full of fine houses, I went to look at the Alfieri palace,

and tried to remember the poet with pleasure; but I could not like him. To me, his austerity is only real in the unpleasantest part of it. The rest seems affected. The human heart in his hands is a tough business; and he thumps and turns it about in his short, violent, and pounding manner, as if it were an iron on a blacksmith's anvil. Alfieri loved liberty like a tyrant, and the Pretender's widow like a slave.

The first sight of the Po, of the mulberry-trees, the meadows, and the Alps, was at once classical, and Italian, and northern. It made us feel that we were taking a great step nearer home. Poirino, a pretty little place, presented us with a sight like a passage in Boccaccio. This was a set of Dominican friars with the chief at their head, issuing out of two coaches, and proceeding along the corridor of the inn to dinner, each holding a bottle of wine in his hand, with the exception of the abbot, who held two. The wine was doubtless their own, that upon the road not being sufficiently orthodox.

Turin is a noble city, like a set of Regent-streets, made twice as tall. We found here some of the most military-looking officers we ever saw, fine, tall, handsome fellows, whom the weather had beaten but not conquered, very gentlemanly, and combining the officer and soldier as completely as could be wished. They had served under Bonaparte. When I saw them, I could understand how it was

that a Piedmontese revolution was more dreaded by the legitimates than any other movement in Italy. The one concocted at that time was betrayed by the heir-apparent, then Prince of Carignan, who undertook to make amends by his heading another, as King Victor Emanuel. A second was lost the other day. Suspicion still clung to him during the vicissitudes of the war; but a death, looking very much like a broken heart, appears to have restored his memory to respect.

At Turin was the finest dancer I had ever seen, a girl of the name of De' Martini. She united the agility of the French school with all that you would expect from the Italian. Italian dancers are in general as mediocre as the French are celebrated; but the French dancers, in spite of all their high notions of the art and the severity of their studies (perhaps that is the reason), have no mind with their bodies. They are busts in barbers' shops, stuck upon legs full of vivacity. You wonder how any lower extremities so lively can leave such an absence of all expression in the upper. De' Martini was a dancer all over. Her countenance partook of the felicity of the limbs. When she came bounding on the stage, in two or three long leaps like a fawn, I should have thought she was a Frenchwoman; but the style undeceived me. She came bounding in front, as if she would have pitched her-

self into the arms of the pit; then made a sudden drop, and addressed three enthusiastic courtesies to the pit and boxes, with a rapidity and yet a grace, a self-abandonment yet a self-possession, quite extraordinary, and such, as to do justice to it, should be described by a poet combining the western ideas of the sex with eastern license. She was beautiful too, both in face and figure, and I thought was a proper dancer to appear before a pit full of those fine fellows I have just mentioned. She seemed as complete in her way as themselves. In short, I never saw anything like it before; and did not wonder, that she had the reputation of turning people's heads wherever she went.

At Sant-Ambrogio, a little town between Turin and Susa, is a proper castle-topped mountain *à la Radcliffe*, the only one we had met with. Susa has some remains connected with Augustus; but Augustus is nobody, or ought to be nobody, to a traveller in modern Italy. He, and twenty like him, never gave me one sensation all the time I was there; and even the better part of the Romans it is difficult to think of. There is something formal and cold about their history, in spite of Virgil and Horace, and even in spite of their own violence, which does not harmonize with the south. They are men in northern iron, and their poets, even the best of them, were copiers of the Greek poets, not originals, like

Dante and Petrarch. So we slept at Susa, not thinking of Augustus, but listening to waterfalls, and thinking of the Alps.

Next morning we beheld a sight worth living for. We were now ascending the Alps; and while yet in the darkness before dawn, we beheld the top of one of the mountains basking in the sunshine. We took it with delighted reverence into our souls, and there it is for ever. The passage of the Alps (thanks to Bonaparte, whom a mountaineer, with brightness in his eyes, called "Napoleon of happy memory,"—*Napoleone di felice memoria*) is now as easy as a road in England. You look up towards airy galleries, and down upon villages that appear like toys, and feel somewhat disappointed at rolling over it all so easily.

The moment we passed the Alps, we found ourselves in France. At Lanslebourg, French was spoken, and amorous groups gesticulated on the papering and curtains. Savoy is a glorious country, a wonderful intermixture of savage precipices and pastoral meads; but the roads are still uneven and bad. The river ran and tumbled, as if in a race with our tumbling carriage. At one time you are in a road like a gigantic rut, deep down in a valley; and at another, up in the air, wheeling along a precipice I know not how many times as high as St. Paul's.

At Chambéry, I could not resist going to see the

house of Rousseau and Madame de Warens, while the coach stopped. It is up a beautiful lane, where you have trees all the way, sloping fields, and a brook; as fit a scene as could be desired. I met some Germans coming away, who congratulated me on being bound, as they had been, to the house of "Jean Jacques." The house itself is of the humbler genteel class, but neat and white, with green blinds. The little chapel, that cost its mistress so much, is still remaining.

We proceeded, through Lyons and Auxerre, to Paris. Beyond Lyons, we met on the road the statue of Louis XIV. going to that city to overawe it with Bourbon memories. It was an equestrian statue, covered up, guarded with soldiers, and looking on that road like some mysterious heap. Don Quixote would have attacked it, and not been thought mad: so much has romance done for us. The natives would infallibly have looked quietly on. There was a riot about it at Lyons, soon after its arrival. I had bought in that city a volume of the songs of Beranger, and I thought to myself, as I met the statue, "I have a little book in my pocket, which will not suffer you to last long." And, surely enough, down it went; for down went King Charles.

Statues rise and fall; but, a little on the other side of Lyons, our postilion exclaimed, "Monte Bianco!" and turning round, I beheld, for the first

time. Mont Blanc, which had been hidden from us, when near it, by a fog. It looked like a turret in the sky, amber-coloured, golden, belonging to the wall of some ethereal world. This, too, is in our memories for ever,—an addition to our stock,—a light for memory to turn to, when it wishes a beam upon its face.

At Paris we could stop but two days, and I had but two thoughts in my head; one of the Revolution, the other of the times of Molière and Boileau. Accordingly, I looked about for the Sorbonne, and went to see the place where the guillotine stood;—the place, where thousands of spirits underwent the last pang of mortality; many guilty, many innocent,—but all the victims of a re-action against tyranny, such as will never let tyranny be what it was, unless a convulsion of nature should swallow up knowledge, and make the world begin over again. These are the thoughts that enable us to bear such sights, and that serve to secure what we hope for.

Paris, besides being a beautiful city in the quarter that strangers most look to, the Tuileries, Quai de Voltaire, &c., delights the eye of a man of letters by the multitude of its book-stalls. There seemed to be a want of old books; but the new were better than the shoal of *Missals* and *Lives of the Saints* that disappoint the lover of duodecimos on the stalls of Italy; and the Rousseaus and Voltaires were end-

less. I thought, if I were a bachelor, not an Englishman, and had no love for old friends and fields, and no decided religious opinions, I could live very well, for the rest of my life, in a lodging above one of the bookseller's shops on the Quai de Voltaire, where I should look over the water to the Tuileries, and have the Elysian fields in my eye for my evening walk.

I liked much what little I saw of the French people. They are accused of vanity; and doubtless they have it, and after a more obvious fashion than other nations; but their vanity, at least, includes the wish to please; other people are necessary to them; they are not wrapped up in themselves; not sulky; not too vain even to tolerate vanity. Their vanity is too much confounded with self-satisfaction. There is a good deal of touchiness, I suspect, among them,—a good deal of ready-made heat, prepared to fire up in case the little commerce of flattery and sweetness is not properly carried on. But this is better than ill-temper, or than such egotism as is not to be appeased by anything short of subjection. On the other hand, there is more melancholy than one could expect, especially in old faces. Consciences in the south are frightened in their old age, perhaps for nothing. In the north, I suspect, they are frightened earlier, perhaps from equal want of knowledge. The worst in France is (at least, from all that I saw), that *fine* old faces are rare. There are multitudes of

pretty girls; but the faces of both sexes fall off deplorably as they advance in life; which is not a good symptom. Nor do the pretty faces, while they last, appear to contain much depth, or sentiment, or firmness of purpose. They seem made like their toys, not to last, but to break up.

Fine faces in Italy are as abundant as cypresses. However, in both countries, the inhabitants appeared to us amiable, as well as intelligent; and without disparagement to the angel faces which you meet with in England, and some of which are perhaps finer than any you see anywhere else, I could not help thinking, that, as a race of females, the countenances both of the French and Italian women announced more pleasantness and reasonableness of intercourse, than those of my fair and serious countrywomen. The Frenchwoman looked as if she wished to please you at any rate, and to be pleased herself. She is too conscious; and her coquetry is said, and I believe with truth, to promise more, than an Englishman would easily find her to perform: but at any rate she thinks of you somehow, and is smiling and good-humoured. An Italian woman appears to think of nothing, not even of herself. Existence seems enough for her. But she also is easy of intercourse, smiling when you speak to her, and very unaffected. Now, in simplicity of character the Italian appears to me to have the advantage of the English women,

and in pleasantness of intercourse both Italian and French. When I came to England, after a residence of four years abroad, I was grieved at the succession of fair sulky faces which I met in the streets of London. They all appeared to come out of unhappy homes. In truth, our virtues, or our climate, or whatever it is, sit so uneasily upon us, that it is surely worth while for our philosophy to inquire whether, in some points of moral and political economy, we are not a little mistaken. Gypsies will hardly allow us to lay it to the climate.

It was a blessed moment, nevertheless, when we found ourselves among those dear sulky faces, the countrywomen of dearer ones, not sulky. On the 12th of October, we set out from Calais in the steam-boat, which carried us rapidly to London, energetically trembling all the way under us, as if its burning body partook of the fervour of our desire. Here (thought we), in the neighbourhood of London, we are; and may we never be without our old fields again in this world, or the old "familiar faces" in this world or in the next.

CHAPTER XXIII.

AT HOME IN ENGLAND.

Highgate and Hampstead.—Italian and English landscape.—Verses to June—Travelling Domiciles.—The Parnaso Italiano.—*Idealizations familiarized.—The Arcadians of Italy.—Spenser, Milton, and other cockney poets.*—Graces and anxieties of pig-driving.—*Exhausted and befriended fortunes.—The* Companion.—Sir Ralph Esher.—*Composition of verse.—A poem with a commentary.—Active molecules.—Inaudible utterance.—A poetical project.*

On returning to England, we lived a while at Highgate, where I took possession of my old English scenery and my favourite haunts, with a delight proportionate to the difference of their beauty from that of beautiful Italy. For a true lover of nature does not require the contrast of good and bad in order to be delighted; he is better pleased with harmonious variety. He is content to wander from beauty to beauty, not losing his love for the one because he loves the other. A variation on a fine theme of

music is better still than a good song after a bad one. It retains none of the bitterness of fault-finding.

I used to think in Italy that I was tired of vines and olives, and the sharp outlines of things against indigo skies; and so I was; but it was from old love, and not from new hatred. I humoured my dislike because I knew it was ill founded. I always loved the scenery at heart, as the cousin-german of all other lovely scenery, especially of that which delighted me in books.

But in England I was at home; and in English scenery I found my old friend "pastoral" still more pastoral. It was like a breakfast of milk and cream after yesterday's wine. The word itself was more verified: for pastoral comes from pasture; it implies cattle feeding, rather than vines growing, or even goats browsing on their tops; and here they were in plenty, very different from the stall-fed and rarely seen cattle of Tuscany. The country around was almost all pasture; and beloved Hampstead was near, with home in its churchyard as well as in its meadows. Again I wandered with transport through

> "Each alley green,
> And every bosky bourn from side to side,—
> My daily walks and ancient neighbourhood."

Only for "bosky bourn" you must read the ponds in which Shelley used to sail his boats, and very little

brooks unknown to all but the eyes of their lovers. The walk across the fields from Highgate to Hampstead, with ponds on one side, and Caen Wood on the other, used to be (and I hope is still, for I have not seen it for some years) one of the prettiest of England. *Poets'* (vulgarly called Millfield) *Lane* crossed it on the side next Highgate, at the foot of a beautiful slope, which in June was covered with daisies and buttercups; and at the other end it descended charmingly into the Vale of Health, out of which rose the highest ground in Hampstead. It was in this spot, and in relation to it and about this time (if I may quote my own verses in illustration of what I felt), that I wrote some lines to "Gypsy June," apostrophizing that brown and happy month on the delights which I found again in my native country, and on the wrongs done him by the pretensions of the month of May.

* * * * *

"May, the jade, with her fresh cheek,
And the love the bards bespeak,—
May, by coming first in sight,
Half defrauds thee of thy right,
For her best is shared by thee
With a wealthier potency;
So that thou dost bring us in
A sort of May-time masculine,
Fit for action or for rest,
As the luxury seems the best,
Bearding now the morning breeze,
Or in love with paths of trees,

Or disposed, full length, to lie
With a hand-enshaded eye
On thy warm and golden slopes,
Basker in the butter-cups;
List'ning with nice distant ears
To the shepherd's clapping shears,
Or the next field's laughing play
In the happy wars of hay,
While its perfume breathes all over,
Or the bean comes fine, or clover.

O could I walk round the earth
With a heart to share my mirth,
With a look to love me ever,
Thoughtful much, but sullen never,
I could be content to see
June and no variety,
Loitering here, and living there,
With a book and frugal fare,
With a finer gypsy time,
And a cuckoo in the clime,
Work at morn, and mirth at noon,
And sleep beneath the sacred moon."

No offence, nevertheless, as John Buncle would have said, to the "stationary domesticities." For fancy takes old habits along with it in new shapes; domesticity itself can travel; and I never desired any better heaven, in this world or the next, than the old earth of my acquaintance put in its finest condition, my own nature being improved, of course, along with it. I have often envied the household waggon that one meets with in sequestered lanes,—a cottage on wheels,—moving whithersoever it pleases, and halting for as long a time as may suit it. So,

at least, one fancies; ignoring all about parish objections, inconvenient neighbourhoods, and want of harmony in the vehicle itself. The pleasantest idea which I can conceive of this world, as far as oneself and one's enjoyments are concerned, is to possess some favourite home in one's native country, and then travel ever all the rest of the globe with those whom we love; always being able to return, if we please; and ever meeting with new objects, as long as we choose to stay away. And I suppose this is what the inhabitants of the world will come to, when they have arrived at years of discretion, and railroads will have hastened the maturity.*

I seemed more at home in England, even with Arcadian idealisms, than I had been in the land nearer their birth-place; for it was in England I first found them in books, and with England even my Italian books were more associated than with Italy itself. When in prison, I had bought the

* "There is a flock of pigeons at Maiano, which, as they go careering in and out among the olive trees, look like the gentle spirits of the Decameron again assembled in another shape. Alas! admire all this as I may, and thankful as I am, I would quit it all for a walk over the fields from Hampstead, to one or two houses I could mention. My imagination can travel a good way; but, like the Tartar, it must carry its tents along with it. New pleasures must have old warrants. I can gain much; but I can afford to lose nothing."—*Notes to "Bacchus in Tuscany,"* p. 174.

collection of poetry called the *Parnaso Italiano*; a work in fifty-six duodecimo volumes, adorned with vignettes. The bookseller, by the way, charged me thirty pounds for it; though I could have got it, had I been wise, for a third part of the sum, albeit it was neatly bound. But I thought it cheap; and joyfully got rid of my thirty pounds for such a southern treasure; which, I must own, has repaid me a million times over, in the pleasure I have received from it. In prison it was truly a lump of sunshine on my shelves; and I have never since been without it. I even took it with me to its native land.

This book aided Spenser himself in filling my English walks with visions of gods and nymphs,—of enchantresses and magicians; for the reader might be surprised to know to what a literal extent such was the case. I suspect I had far more sights of "Proteus coming from the sea," than Mr. Wordsworth himself; for he desired them only in despair of getting anything better out of the matter-of-fact state of the world about him; whereas, the world had never been able to deprive me, either of the best hopes for itself, or of any kind of vision, sacred or profane, which I thought suitable to heaven or earth. I saw fairies in every wood, as I did the advent of a nobler Christianity in the churches; and by the help of the beautiful universality which

books had taught me, I found those two classes of things not less compatible than Chaucer and Boccaccio did, when they talked of "Holy Ovid" and invoked the saints and the gods in the same exordium. I found even a respectful corner in my imagination for those poetical grown children in Italy, who (literally) played at "Arcadians" in gardens made for the purpose, and assumed names from imaginary farms in old Greece. The "bays" upon poets' heads in old books had prepared me, when a boy, to like that image of literary success. I had myself played at it in dedications and household pastimes; and the names of Filicaia, Menzini, Guidi, and other grave and classical Italian poets, who had joined the masquerade in good faith, completed my willingness not to disesteem it.

The meaning of all this is, that at the time of my life in question, I know not in which I took more delight—the actual fields and woods of my native country, the talk of such things in books, or the belief which I entertained that I should one day be joined in remembrance with those who had talked it. I used to stroll about the meadows half the day, with a book under my arm, generally a "Parnaso" or a Spenser, and wonder that I met nobody who seemed to like the fields as I did. The jests about Londoners and Cockneys did not affect me in the least, as far as my faith was concerned. They might

as well have said that Hampstead was not beautiful, or Richmond lovely; or that Chaucer and Milton were Cockneys when they went out of London to lie on the grass and look at the daisies. The Cockney school of poetry is the most illustrious in England; for, to say nothing of Pope and Gray, who were both veritable Cockneys, "born within the sound of Bow Bell," Milton was so too; and Chaucer and Spenser were both natives of the city. Of the four greatest English poets, Shakspeare only was not a Londoner.

But the charge of Cockneyism frightened the booksellers. I could never understand till this moment, what it was, for instance, that made the editor of a magazine reject an article which I wrote, with the mock-heroical title of *The Graces and Anxieties of Pig-Driving*. I used to think he found something vulgar in the title. He declared that it was not he who rejected it, but the proprietor of the magazine. The proprietor, on the other hand, declared that it was not he who rejected it, but the editor. I published it in a magazine of my own, and found it hailed as one of my best pieces of writing. But the subject was a man inducting a pig into Smithfield through the intricacies of Cockney lanes and alleys; and the names of Smithfield, and Barbican, and Bell-alley, and Ducking Pond-row, were not to be ventured in the teeth of my friends the

Tories under the signature of the quondam editor of the *Examiner*. I subsequently wrote a fictitious autobiography, of which I shall speak presently, under the title of *Sir Ralph Esher*. It was republished the other day with my name to it for the first time. The publisher in those days of Toryism and Tory jesting would not venture to put it. I was at length irritated by misrepresentations on the subject of Lord Byron to publish some autobiographical accounts of myself, and a refutation of matters relating to his lordship; and to this book, for obvious reasons, my name was suffered to be attached; but this only made matters worse; and it is inconceivable to what extent I suffered, in mind, body, and estate, because the tide of affairs was against me, and because the public (which is not the best trait in their character) are inclined to believe whatever is said of a man by the prosperous. I have since been lauded to the skies, on no other account, for productions which at that period fell dead from the press. People have thought I wrote them yesterday; and I have sometimes been at once mystified and relieved, to observe who the persons were that have so praised them, and what they have omitted to notice for no better reason. It is said, and I believe truly, that no man in the long run can be written down, or up, except by himself; but it is painful to think how much can be done to both pur-

poses in the mean time, and for those who deserve neither the one nor the other. A secret history of criticism, for some twenty years at a time, with its favouritisms, its animosities, and its hesitations, would make a very curious book; but the subject would be so disagreeable, that it would require almost as disagreeable a person to write it.

But adieu to records of this kind for ever. It is not possible for many persons to have had greater friends than I have. I am not aware that I have now a single enemy; and I accept the fortunes which have occurred to me, bad and good, with the same disposition to believe them the best that could have happened, whether for the correction of what was wrong in me, or the improvement of what was right.

I struggled successfully with this state of things, as long as their causes lasted. It was not till Toryism began its declension with the rise of Louis Philippe, and the small stock of readers who never left me was increasing, that the consequences of what I had battled with, forced me almost to drop the pen for some years. I had never lost cheerfulness of tone, for I had never ceased to be cheerful in my opinions. I had now reason to be more hopeful than ever; but the wounds resulting from a long conflict, my old ignorance of business, and that very tendency to reap pleasure from every object in creation, which

at once reconciled me to loss, retained me my few readers, and hindered me from competing with the more prudential lessons of writers who addressed the then state of society, conspired to set me at the mercy of wants and creditors. The ailment from which I suffered in Italy returned with double force; and I know not what would have happened to me for some time, short of what temperance and my opinions rendered impossible, if friends, with a delicacy as well as generosity which I have never been able to thank sufficiently to this day (for the names of some with whom I was not conversant eluded my gratitude) had not supplied the defects of fortune, and enabled me to smile retrospectively at editors who feared the circles, and booksellers who stood in awe of reviews. Ought I to blush for stating my obligations thus publicly? I do, if it be held fit that I should; for I am loth not to do what is expected of me, even by a respectable prejudice, when it is on the side of delicacy and self-respect. But far more, I conceive, should I have reason to blush, and upon those very accounts, first, if I could not dare to distinguish between an ordinary and an exceptional case; and secondly, and most of all, if I could not subordinate a prejudice, however respectable, to the first principles of social esteem, and justify by my gratitude the sympathies which my writings had excited.

The little periodical work to which I have alluded —the *Companion*—consisted partly of criticisms on theatres, authors, and public events, and partly of a series of essays in the manner of the *Indicator*. Some of the latter have since accompanied the republications of that work. They contained some of what afterwards turned out to be my most popular writings. But I had no money to advertise the publication; it did not address itself to any existing influence; and in little more than half a year I was forced to bring it to a conclusion.

The *Companion* was written at Highgate; but the opening of the court scenes in *Sir Ralph Esher* was suggested by the locality of Epsom, to which place we had removed, and which saw the termination of what it had commenced.

Those who are not acquainted with the work, may be told that it is the fictitious autobiography of a gentleman of the court of Charles the Second, including the adventures of another, and notices of Cromwell, the Puritans, and the Catholics. It was given to the world anonymously, and, notwithstanding my wishes to the contrary, as a novel; but the publisher pleaded hard for the desirableness of so doing; and as he was a good-natured man, and had liberally enabled me to come from Italy, I could not say Nay. It is not destitute of adventure; and I took a world of pains to make it true to the times which it pic-

tured; but whatever interest it may possess is so entirely owing, I conceive, to a certain reflecting exhibition of character, and to fac-simile imitations of the courts of Charles and Cromwell, that I can never present it to my mind in any other light than that of a veritable set of memoirs.

The reader may judge of the circumstances under which authors sometimes write, when I tell him that the publisher had entered into no regular agreement respecting this work; that he could decline receiving any more of it whenever it might please him to do so; that I had nothing else at the time to depend on for my family; that I was in very bad health, never writing a page that did not put my nerves into a state of excessive sensibility, starting at every sound; and that whenever I sent the copy up to London for payment, which I did every Saturday, I always expected, till I got a good way into the work, that he would send me word he had had enough. I waxed and waned in spirits accordingly, as the weeks opened and terminated; now being as full of them as my hero Sir Ralph, and now as much otherwise as his friend Sir Philip Herne; and these two extremes of mirth and melancholy, and the analogous thoughts which they fed, made a strange kind of harmony with the characters themselves; which characters, by the way, were wholly fictitious, and probably suggested by the circumstance. Merry or

melancholy, my nerves equally suffered by the tensity occasioned them in composition. I could never (and I seldom ever could, or can) write a few hundred words without a certain degree of emotion, which in a little while suspends the breath, then produces a flushing in the face, and, if persevered in, makes me wake up, when I have finished, in a sort of surprise at the objects around me, and a necessity of composing myself by patience and exercise. When the health is at its worst, a dread is thus apt to be produced at the idea of recommencing; and work is delayed, only to aggravate the result. I have often tried, and sometimes been forced to write only a very little while at a time, and so escape the accumulation of excitement; but it is very difficult to do this; for you forget the intention in the excitement itself; and when you call it to mind, you continue writing, in the hope of concluding the task for the day. A few months ago, when I had occasion to look at *Sir Ralph Esher* again, after some lapse of time, I was not a little pleased to find how glibly and at their ease the words appeared to run on, as though I had suffered no more in writing it than Sir Ralph himself. But thus it is with authors who are in earnest. The propriety of what they are saying becomes a matter of as much nervous interest to them, as any other exciting cause; and I believe, that if a writer of this kind were summoned away from his work to be

taken to the scaffold, he would not willingly leave his last sentence in erroneous condition.

The reader may be surprised to hear, after these remarks, that what I write with the greatest composure is verses. He may smile, and say that he does not wonder, since the more art the less nature, or the more artificiality the less earnestness. But it is not that; it is that I write verses, only when I most like to write; that I write them slowly, with loving recurrence, and that the musical form is a perpetual solace and refreshment. The earnestness is not the less. In one respect it is greater, for it is more concentrated. It is forced, by a sweet necessity, to say more things in less compass. But then the necessity *is* sweet. The mode, and the sense of being able to meet its requirements, in however comparative a degree, are more than a sustainment: they are a charm. This is the reason why poetry, not of the highest order, is sometimes found so acceptable. The author feels so much happiness in his task, that he cannot but convey happiness to his reader.

I feel greatly perplexed in this work, when about to speak of my writings. The nature of it requires that I should do so, and I find myself in a dilemma between readers to whom they are known, and such as may hear of them without knowing them. To the former any account of them may be superfluous, and passages more than

unnecessary, besides looking egotistical. With the latter the case may be otherwise, yet it is hardly less puzzling. Perhaps the best way will be to do what I think most authors would be glad of an opportunity of doing, were they sure of a handsome construction of their motives; namely, give a brief occasional extract, with remarks on the feelings under which it was written, the objects it had in view, and the amount of artistic study which they may have brought to its treatment. Young readers addicted to the like studies may, for obvious reasons, not be sorry to hear such remarks; and an author's most familiar readers, by very reason of their familiarity, may give him a more willing hearing than any. I have commented, in my time, on many a verse of my contemporaries. I will now do as much for one or two of my own.

The proceeding is not new in the poetical world. The old Italian poets, with Dante at their head, set examples of it; and in truth it is impossible not to wish that other writers had done so, whether one's own proceeding be desirable or not. What would I not have given at school for a *Gray* and a *Collins* made double their size by the author's elucidations of trains of thought, and the circumstances that gave rise to them? What fights among his commentators might not Shakspeare's own comments have saved us? And who would not have been glad of elucidations from Spenser respecting his Platonical

mysticisms on the nature of man? of divine gossip with him about his woods, and his solitudes, and his nymphs, his oceans, and his heaven?

But I must quit the perilous neighbourhood of those great names.

A distinguished female novelist, in whose chapters I often found myself quoted when my fortunes with the critics were at their worst (which is one of the many evidences of highmindedness given by her rare and cordial genius), selected, among others, one of the passages in the following lines. Mrs. Gore believed them to be an effusion of actual enjoyment, called forth by the circumstances which they described: and they were so. I was in one of my happiest *Ralph Esher* moments. The publisher was propitious, and May had burst forth in all its glory, after a bad season. I had just seen an apple-tree in the garden filled with a swarm of bees; the return of the blossoms suggested a new view of an old human regret; and while I was in the act of enjoying it, a bee came into the room as I have described, and put the thoughts into my head with which the poem concludes.

LINES WRITTEN ON A BURST OF FINE WEATHER IN MAY.

"Reader! what soul that loves a verse, can see
The spring return, nor glow like you and me?
Hear the quick birds, and see the landscape fill,
Nor long to utter his harmonious will?"

Comment. In the last edition of this poem, the epithet, I see, which is applied to "will," is "melodious." But I feel convinced that in the manuscript it was such as I have here given it. The allusion is not simply to musical harmony, but to harmony with nature in general, and with the feeling of the season.

The epithet "quick" is applied to birds, because if they have any one prevailing characteristic above others, it is that of suddenness and shortness in their movements.

> "This more than ever leaps into the veins,
> When spring has been delay'd by winds and rains,
> And coming with a burst, comes like a show,
> Blue all above, and basking green below,
> And all the people culling the sweet prime:
> Then issues forth the bee, to clutch the thyme,
> And the bee poet rushes into rhyme."

That is to say, as the bee himself rushes into the flower. And everybody knows with what fervour the bee does it, and how he clutches the thyme, I will not say with his legs, for a bee's legs are as much arms as legs;—members with which he assists himself in doing a world of fine work—poetizing in wax and honey.

The phrase "bee poet" is not taken from Plato, though the philosopher has likened the poet to the bee; adding, that he is "a light, a winged, and a sacred thing." The bee himself suggested the image, more particularly in reference to the season; for no

two things are more simultaneously to be reckoned upon, than the bee issuing forth to the spring flowers, and the poet doing the same, either in body or soul.

The triplet at the end of this passage flows out of a certain analogous inability to stop shorter, owing to the earnestness and accumulating force of the impulse.

Note, also, for a like reason, and from the sense of oneness or general impression in the midst of variety, the tendency to alliteration :—

> "And coming with a *burst*, comes with a show,
> *Blue* all above, and *basking* green *below* ;—
> Then issues forth the *bee* to clutch the thyme,
> And the *bee* poet *rushes* into *rhyme*.
>
> For lo! no sooner has the cold withdrawn,
> Than the bright elm is tufted on the lawn:

There stood one before my window on a green, bright (so to speak) as an emerald, with its full new foliage and the cloudless sunshine.

> The merry sap has run up in the bowers,
> And burst the windows of the buds in flowers:

That is to say, as people in-doors run up-stairs upon holidays, to look out of window at some fine sight, and shew their happy faces to their friends.

> With song the bosoms of the birds run o'er,
> The cuckoo calls, the swallow 's at the door,
> And apple-trees at noon, with bees alive,
> Burn with the golden chorus of the hive.

I had just seen the apple-tree beforementioned, full of a swarm of bees, and literally seeming to burn with them, both in sight and sound. There was a look of black and burnished gold, thronging and fermenting throughout the mass of sunny white blossom.

> Now all these sweets, these sounds, this vernal blaze,
> Is but one joy, express'd a thousand ways;
> And honey from the flowers, and songs from birds,
> Are from the poet's pen his overflowing words."

With this overflowing, the long Alexandrine verse is intended to correspond.

As to the sentiment—the unity and identity of the joy—the meaning implied is to be taken literally. For nature produces her wonderful variety from a few compounds, which the more they are analyzed, turn out to have identical elements; and as all the senses are reducible to the sense of touch, so it is not improbable that all feelings which excite analogous ideas, not excepting moral feelings, have some identity in their nature, and all other analogous results some identity in their cause; birds uttering their songs from the same impulse by which poets sing, and even the physical sense of sweetness imparted by honey not being without a corresponding sameness in the sweetness of moral perception. Flowers themselves are great and living mysteries, built up of apparently animated molecules, which

seem to issue forth in other compound forms at the top or climax of the flower, the blossom; after which they give birth to new ones, and depart.*

> "Ah, friends! methinks it were a pleasant sphere,
> If, like the trees, we blossom'd every year;
> If locks grew thick again, and rosy dyes
> Return'd in cheeks, and raciness in eyes,
> And all around us, vital to the tips,
> The human orchard laugh'd with cherry lips."

"Raciness" in eyes—to keep up the analogy with the garden; raciness being the first fresh, unadulterated quality of any production, derivable through its root from its first principles.

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* See, in the *National Cyclopædia*, an account of the extraordinary mystery, familiarly known among botanists under the name of "Brown's dance." But I will lay it before the reader.

"Active molecules, in plants, are extremely minute, apparently spherical, moving particles, found in all vegetable matter when rubbed in pieces and examined under very powerful microscopes. In size they vary from the $\frac{1}{1500}$ to $\frac{1}{3000}$ of an inch in diameter, and are only to be detected with lenses capable of magnifying at least 300 diameters. Viewed under favourable circumstances, immersed in water, and with transmitted light, they are seen to have a rapid motion of an oscillating nature, so that a minute drop of fluid in which they swim, seems to be, as it were, alive. In the pollen of plants they are extremely numerous, and perfectly distinct from each other, so that a grain of pollen crushed in water is one of the best subjects for the observer to select; he will there find the active molecules mixed with oblong or cylindrical particles of a larger size, and equally in motion; the latter are the spermatic granules, by the agency of which the fertilization of plants pro-

For "vitality to the tips," observe the carnation at the end of healthy fingers (the "rosy-fingered" hands in poetry), and the viscous and glistening buds at the tips of some boughs in spring; those, for instance, of the horse-chestnut.

The vowels in the above passage have been toned with as great a variety as possible, in order to increase the sense of vitality and will.

> "Lord, what a burst of merriment and play,
> Fair dames, were that! and what a first of May!
> So natural is the wish, that bards, gone by,
> Have left it, all, in some immortal sigh.

A sigh seems one of the most evanescent of all things, and yet the poet sighs, and we hear it for ever.

> And yet the winter months were not so well:
> Who would like changing, as the seasons fell?
> Fade every year? and stare, midst ghastly friends,
> With falling hairs, and stuck-out fingers' ends?"

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bably takes place. To find the active molecules in other parts of plants, it is necessary that they should be crushed and rubbed in water till it becomes greenish; a drop of coloured fluid will be found to contain vast numbers of these molecules moving about with great rapidity, and exhibiting every appearance of animal life. Curious as these circumstances undoubtedly are, it is still more singular that the movements of the molecules do not cease with the life of a plant; on the contrary, they have been witnessed by Dr. Brown even in the fossilized remains of vegetables, and may be readily seen, by colouring water with the dead vegetable matter called gamboge, when the molecules are instantly set at liberty, and commence their motions."

That is to say, we are better as we are, with our simultaneous diversities of young and old, of dying, and maturing, and being born, than if we were all to be young—and young only at one and the same time —and then old and all dying, without, perhaps, even knowing that we were to be renewed. At present we hope for immortality when old, and have at the same time the pleasure of seeing youth and health existing.

"Besides, this tale of youth that comes again,
Is no more true of apple-trees, than men.
The Swedish sage, the Newton of the flowers,*
Who first found out those worlds of paramours,
Tells us, that every blossom that we see
Holds in its walls a separate family;
So that a tree is but a sort of stand,
That holds those filial fairies in its hand;
Just as Swift's giant might have held a bevy
Of Lilliputian ladies, or a levee.
It is not he that blooms: it is his race,
Who honour his old arms, and hide his rugged face.

Naturalists are now agreed on this point. The tree itself can never be said to be renewed. After a certain growth, it keeps regularly decaying, whatever new blossoms it may put forth. It is a father who continues to have children, but has no childhood renewed of his own.

Ye wits and bards, then, pray discern your duty,
And learn the *lastingness* of human beauty:

* Linnæus.

A new lesson, I conceive, and one for which we have yet to be sufficiently thankful.

> Your finest fruit to some two months may reach:
> I've known a cheek at forty like a peach."

Brantome, speaking of Diana of Poitiers, says "at fifty;" nay, "at sixty." And it is possible to conceive it, knowing how long some persons have lived, and what a healthy and easy life Diana seems to have led. At all events, the peach will not do to compare with the cheek. The cheek shall see down forty good generations of peaches, besides living and blooming during all the long intervals between their autumns.

> "But see! the weather calls me. Here's a bee
> Comes bounding in my room imperiously;
> And, talking to himself, hastily burns
> About mine ear, and so in heat returns."

A literal description of the bee beforementioned, who came as if to call me forth, and seemed very angry and remonstrative at my not obeying him on the instant.

> "O little brethren of the fervid soul,

(the bees to-wit)

> Kissers of flowers, lords of the golden bowl,
> I follow to your fields and tufted brooks:

Those were the three lines quoted by Mrs. Gore.

> Winter's the time to which the poet looks
> For hiving his sweet thoughts, and making honied books."

Yes; if he can afford the time, and resist the pleasure meanwhile, and has any great task to contemplate when he sits down to work. Otherwise, though he may well pass his days in the fields during summer, and be content with collecting food for his winter ruminations, it is difficult not to feed a little as he goes—not to taste the honey which he is collecting.

There are some other small poems of mine, which I would willingly have collected into a volume by themselves, and commented on in this manner, both for the pleasure of dilating upon their topics, and for the sake of such readers as are given to the like kind of reflection. They might have regarded it as a sort of conversation with them. Among others are the poem entitled *Our Cottage*, the *Fish, the Man and the Spirit*, the *Reflections of a Dead Body*, the *Song of the Flowers*, an effusion on *Christmas*, an *Ode to the Sun*, and a few smaller pieces which have not been published. I would fain have shown, that some of the poems which appear the lightest, were written with intentions the gravest; those of the gravest appearance, with tendencies the most cheerful; and all, indeed, with a purpose to that end, which I believe to be Nature's own, and to be the secret which she most wishes to see developed. Among other advantages, comments of this kind would sometimes give an author the opportunity of making explanations where he has been misconceived.

It has been thought, for instance, a blunder to speak of *inaudible utterances;* utterances that, in the popular acceptation of the word, utter nothing;—have no words. It is used in that sense in the opening of one of the poems before mentioned, the *Song of the Flowers.*

"We are the sweet flowers,
Born of sunny showers;
Think, whene'er you see us, what our beauty saith;
Utterance mute and bright
Of some unknown delight,
We fill the air with pleasure by our simple breath.
All who see us, love us;
We befit all places;
Unto sorrows we give smiles, and unto graces, graces."

But the simple meaning of "utterance" is *outer*-ance—putting *out* or forth; as "utter darkness" is "outer darkness;" and "utterance," in law, means publication of words or exhibition of wares. Thus flowers utter their beauty and their fragrance, as much as birds utter their songs.

"Utterance mute and bright,
Of some unknown delight."

The delight is unknown; that is to say, we do not know its cause, or even its nature,—the cause why its beauty and its fragrance delight us. This we do not behold; it does not come *out* to us: but the flower does; the flower is uttered; it is put forth by that mysterious cause; and the mystery adds to the delight by increasing our wonder.

Let me observe with regard to the line,

"All who see us, love us,"

that flowers seem to be unique in attracting universal affection. Many persons do not care for music or painting. They think pictures daubs, and call music and singing, strumming and squalling. Mr. Forsyth, a traveller in Italy (of all places!), and a very clever traveller too, ranks music with perfumery. But who ever speaks ill of flowers?

"We befit all places."

This, too, seems predicable of flowers only, if colour be excepted; and colour itself is a thing floral. Flowers are alike suitable in palaces and in huts, in the richest and the barrenest places; in prisons, in cemeteries, in theatres, in churches, in shops, in offices, in markets, in courts of law, on the lady's bosom, and in the button-hole of the veriest blackguard. Yes; for it shows that even he is not insensible to the beautiful.

"Unto sorrows we give smiles,—and unto graces, graces."

When I wrote this poem, I fancied myself (so to speak) writing also the music to it in the flow of the verses, in the different placing of the accents, and in the toning of the vowels. Hence the *andante*, or onward-going movement, neither too quick nor too slow, to express something between enthusiasm and calmness. Hence in this stanza the monotonous

sound of the proposition in the first line on the words *we* and *sweet;* the contrast to it in the three different vowels of the second line; the accents, in the third, on the words *think, beauty,* and *saith;* the same diversity in the succeeding lines; and the repetition of the word *graces* at the close.

The last verse is made one verse instead of two, in order to preserve a feeling of the continuous, and send off the cadence flowingly.

I have sometimes thought of venturing a novelty in metrical composition, of which this stanza, perhaps, might serve as a specimen. The reader will conclude it to be no very bold one. Perhaps it is none at all, except in name. The poets of other countries might be found to have done it already, if we knew the principles on which some of their smäller effusions are grounded; such, for instance, as the Italian madrigal, of which I never could discover the system. The *Rondeau* is certainly one, though of a limited kind. It has a regular *ritornello;* and, indeed, it originated in words adapted to musical compositions of the same name. The design which I propose is to take up some one thought or feeling, render it as new and as variously musical as possible in the construction, and call it, by reason of that intention, an *Air* or *Melody;* that is to say, a strain at once brief and complete, analogous to the air in vocal music, or to whatever else it may be

called in instrumental. The sonnet might be thought a poem of this kind; but it is too long. The poetry of all "songs" ought also, perhaps, to be understood as belonging to the class; but the case is certainly not so. The musical part of the intention is too often left entirely to the musician. There are, however, many samples of it, whether intended or otherwise, in the lyrics of Beaumont and Fletcher; and poetry abounds with them in detached passages, thus completing the analogy with musical composition; airs of the loveliest invention being of frequent occurrence in the instrumental works of Mozart and Beethoven.* A fancy or feeling occasionally crosses a poet's mind, which, by reason of its lightness, or even of its depth and voluminousness, he does not feel inclined to enlarge upon. He loves it, however, and is disposed to dwell on it, for its own sufficing sake. It is a pity to lose it: why should he not do it justice, and make the most of it? Now I think he could not do this better than by treating it in the way proposed. Suppose Mr. Browning, or

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* "Dans les opéra l'on donne le nom d'*airs* à tous les chants mesurés pour les distinguer du récitatif; et généralement on appelle *air* tout morceau complet de musique vocale ou instrumentale formant un chant, soit que ce morceau fasse lui seul une pièce entière, soit qu'on puisse le détacher du tout dont il fait partie, et l'exécuter séparément." —Rousseau, *Dictionnaire de Musique.*

Mr. Horne, or Tennyson, were to set it going. They are all emphatically musical poets; two of them players on instruments. Or, suppose it be done by some of the young poets now coming up, such as Edmund Ollier, Mr. Sutton, or Mr. Sydney Yendys.

To return a little to this poem:—as flowers are universally beloved, so colour itself ought to be, for there is nothing more universal in nature, or what she seems to love better herself. I am sure that in this country of England we do not half enough value it. We seem to think it incumbent on us to grow dull, as the weather grows dull; though we can light up the darkness fast enough, if business demand it. Nature assuredly sets us no such example of insensibility. Her's is anything in general but a "drab-coloured creation," whatever our sulkiness may choose to think it in this English corner of ours.

> See, and scorn all duller
> Taste, how heav'n loves colour,
> How great Nature, clearly, joys in red and green;
> What sweet thoughts she thinks
> Of violets and pinks,
> And a thousand flushing hues, made solely to be seen:

(That is to say, by us. I know not what their other uses may be;—perhaps to temper light and shade to insects.)

> See her whitest lilies
> Chill the silver showers,
> And what a red mouth has her rose, the woman of the flowers.

White lilies and *silver showers* are what the heralds call "colour upon colour," which is a thing they do not love, though they ought upon occasion. I have seen a picture by Titian, all yellow and sunshine; and a divine picture it was. In this case as in others; "the same is not the same," but a subtle difference and a harmony. Besides, you may keep up the sameness, in order to give greater zest to some difference ensuing, as in the case of these lilies and roses.

As to the "thoughts" of Nature; if we are asked how we know she thinks them, it is to be answered, By the same rule we know the thoughts of men. She "utters" them. But you will say, "not in words." No, truly; but in what is far more palpable than words; in things themselves—solid utterances, of which words are only invisible symbols. But she thinks, also, pains and troubles! Yes, and so do the kindest of men, and for the kindest purposes. Let us, therefore, believe that Nature thinks them to the like end. Meantime, here, at all events, are these profuse and beautiful thoughts of Nature, called "flowers;" and if gladness of aspect augurs in *her* what it does in us, with what delight she utters them!

In another passage of this poem, the beautiful mystery is recurred to, which has been noticed at page 200. The bee and the butterfly are first mentioned, and then the phenomenon in question, as

it may be seen in the corolla of the "poorest weed," as well as in that of the rose and lily.

And oh! our sweet soul-taker,
That thief, the honey-maker,
What a house hath he by the thymy glen!
In his talking rooms
How the feasting fumes

(The inside of the bee-hive is very hot)

Till his gold cups overflow, to the mouths of men!
The butterflies come aping
Those fine thieves of ours,
And flutter round our rifled tops, like tickled flowers with flowers.

See those tops, how beauteous!
What fair service duteous
Round some idol waits, as on their lord the Nine?

(Like the Muses round Apollo)

Elfin court 'twould seem;
And taught perchance that dream,
Which the old Greek mountain dreamt, upon nights divine.

(Mount Helicon or Parnassus. The "dream is the one that has just been mentioned—the Muses round Apollo.)

To expound such wonder
Human speech avails not;
Yet there dies no poorest weed, that such a glory exhales not."

"Weeds of glorious feature," as Spenser calls them. For there are no weeds in poetry, any more than in Nature's respect for her works. What the gardener calls a weed, is a wonder, built by those fairy-like things, the "active molecules," with as much elaboration as pinks and roses, and inhabited

by the beautiful, perhaps by the loving, most likely by innocent and happy creations of some kind, however perishing—perishing, let us believe, softly, as accords with innocence.

One more passage from this *Song of the Flowers*, for the sake of a reflection that has often struck me, when I have been looking at hardness of any kind—moral hardness not excepted—and thinking how soft and tender may have been its origin, and what sweetness may be lurking somewhere in its core:—

"Trees themselves are ours;
Fruits are born of flowers;
Peach and roughest nut were blossoms in the spring:
The lusty bee knows well
The news, and comes pell-mell,
And dances in the bloomy thicks with darksome antheming."

This was another allusion to my friend the apple-tree, which I saw swarming with bees in our Epsom garden—

"A thing of beauty is a joy for ever."

That apple-tree is always standing in a corner of the memory, to go to wherever I choose, and behold its white mass of blossom, saturated with the dark and golden bees, all buzzing and beatified. A nut was once a blossom. A cocoa-nut was once a tender bud, not to be touched perhaps without injury, and containing a quintessence of curious life. Nature's first germs are always tender and touching. You

cannot think of them with too reverent a gladness, nor too highly of what must ultimately result from all the grace and beauty with which she thinks it worth her while to fill her progressing planets.

CHAPTER XXIV.

LITERARY PROJECTS.

The Tatler.—Chat of the Week—*M. Van de Weyer.*—*The* Gentle Armour.—*The* True Sun.—*Laman Blanchard.*—*Residence in Chelsea.*—*Thomas Carlyle.*—*The* London Journal.—*The* Seer.—*Egerton Webbe*—*His Parodies of Martial.*—Captain Sword *and* Captain Pen.—*Paganini.*—Monthly Repository.—Blue-Stocking Revels.—*Lady Blessington.*

We left Epsom to return to the neighbourhood of London, which was ever the natural abiding place of men of letters, till railroads enlarged their bounds. We found a house in a sequestered corner of Old Brompton, and a landlord in the person of my friend Charles Knight, with whom an intercourse commenced, which I believe has been a pleasure on both sides. I am sure it has been a good to myself. If I had not a reverence of a peculiar sort for the inevitable past, I could wish that I had begun writing for Mr. Knight immediately, instead of attempting to set up another periodical work of my own, without either means to promulgate it, or health to render the

failure of little consequence. I speak of a literary and theatrical paper called the *Tatler*. It was a very little work, consisting but of four folio pages; but it was a daily publication: I did it all myself, except when too ill; and illness seldom hindered me either from supplying the review of a book, going every night to the play, or writing the notice of the play the same night at the printing-office. The consequence was, that the work, slight as it looked, nearly killed me; for it never prospered beyond the coterie of play-going readers, to whom it was almost exclusively known; and I was sensible of becoming weaker and poorer every day. When I came home at night, often at morning, I used to feel as if I could hardly speak; and for a year and a half afterwards, a certain grain of fatigue seemed to pervade my limbs, which I thought would never go off. Such, nevertheless, is a habit of the mind, if it be but cultivated, that my spirits never seemed better, nor did I ever write theatricals so well, as in the pages of this most unremunerating speculation.

I had attempted, just before, to set up a little work called *Chat of the Week;* which was to talk, without scandal, of anything worth public notice. The Government put a stop to this speculation by insisting that it should have a stamp; which I could not afford. I was very angry, and tilted against governments, and aristocracies, and kings

and princes in general; always excepting King William, for whom I had regard as a reformer, and Louis Philippe, whom I fancied to be a philosopher. I also got out of patience with my old antagonists the Tories, to whom I resolved to give as good as they brought; and I did so, and stopped every new assailant. A daily paper, however small, is a weapon that gives an immense advantage; you can make your attacks in it so often. However, I always ceased as soon as my antagonists did.

In a year or two after the cessation of the *Tatler*, my collected verses were published by subscription (not of course, solicited); and as a re-action by this time had taken place in favour of political and other progress, and the honest portion of its opponents had not been unwilling to discover the honesty of those with whom they differed, a very handsome list of subscribers appeared in the *Times* newspaper, comprising names of all shades of opinion, some of my sharpest personal antagonists not excepted. It was by mere accident that the list was omitted in the volume. I was gratified to hear that the first person who went and put down his name at the bookseller's, was the present Belgian Ambassador, M. Van de Weyer. I fancied that I saw in this proceeding the combined manifestation of a willing personal reader and a corroborator of the good-will entertained towards me by the illustrious house

which he served. For, in my desire to be loyal whenever I could, I had written some verses on the death of the Princess Charlotte, not without expressions due to the merits of the Prince her husband; and it was only from a doubt of their being worthy of the subject, that they were not republished in the volume. I had the honour, not a long time ago, of making his Excellency's acquaintance; and I found in him precisely the sort of man which the promptitude of his subscription, and, to say the truth, his regard for my writings, had made me suppose him;—frank, cordial, outspoken, a lover of books and of his species, a worthy representative of one of the most reasonable of kings. M. Van de Weyer speaks English like a native; and, among other evidences of his regard for our country, he possesses what it has often surprised me has never yet been embodied in England, after the fashion of our "British Poets"; namely, a collection of the writings of our moral philosophers. An ambassador is qualified indeed to maintain the good understanding of nations, when he comes among them with credentials like these.

In this edition of my *Poetical Works* is to be found the only printed copy of a poem, the title of which (*The Gentle Armour*) has been a puzzle for guessers. It originated in curious notions of delicacy. The poem is founded on one of the French

fabliaux, entitled *Les Trois Chevaliers et la Chemise.* It is the story of a knight, who, to free himself from an imputation of cowardice, fights against three other knights in no stouter armour than a lady's garment thus indicated. The late Mr. Way, who first introduced the story to the British public, and who was as respectable and conventional a gentleman, I believe, in every point of view, as could be desired, had no hesitation, some years ago, in rendering the French title of the poem by its (then) corresponding English words, *The Three Knights and the Smock;* but so rapid are the changes that take place in people's notions of what is decorous, that not only has the word "smock" (of which it was impossible to see the indelicacy, till people were determined to find it) been displaced since that time by the word "shift"; but even that harmless expression for the act of changing one garment for another, has been set aside in favour of the French word "chemise"; and at length not even this word, it seems, is to be mentioned, nor the garment itself alluded to, by any decent writer! Such, at least, appears to have been the dictum of some customer, or customers, of the bookseller who published the poem. The title was altered to please these gentlemen; and in a subsequent edition of the Works, the poem itself was withdrawn from their virgin eyes.

The terrible original title was the *Battle of the*

Shift; and a more truly delicate story, I will venture to affirm, never was written. Charles Lamb thought the new title unworthy of its refinement, "because it seemed ashamed of the right one." He preferred the honest old word. But this was the author of *Rosamond Gray.* The author of *Broad Grins,* when he became dramatic licenser, would have ousted the word in terror. An old rake may be allowed to have different notions of such things from a harmless man of letters; but are readers in general, especially those who are purest, to be supposed liable to the associations of ideas that degrade and stultify the minds of old rakes? Must nothing be accepted as pure, that has not passed through the muddy alembic of an imagination "on town?"—of minds victimized by *double entendres,* and that must see in everything, or in nothing, whatever their monomania bids them see? I do not mean to say, that the interferers in this instance were old rakes. I know not who they were. Probably the rakes had frightened them. But I say that such alarms are unworthy of participation by the right-minded; and that such imputed indelicacies, such effeminate and gross misgivings, tend to lower and to enfeeble a masculine literature.

I will quote the close of this poem, in order to show the spirit in which it was written. The heroine had been led to believe that her lover was a coward;

he has an opportunity of showing her that he is none, and writes to her, entreating for some little token of her goodwill, which he may wear on the occasion,—some ribbon or glove, or other sign of favour and encouragement, usually accorded by ladies to their knights. She sends him in contempt a shift. Her opinion is, that the only garment befitting him is a woman's, not a man's. The aggrieved, yet rejoicing lover fights, as before-mentioned; conquers in the most glorious, but exhausting manner, being nearly killed in the achievement; and the lady, when he is cured and marries her, makes her unexpected appearance at the altar in the remorseful shift, that had been cut up into tatters.

"What need I say? a loitering cure is his,
But full of sweets, and precious memories,
And whispers, laden from the land of bliss.
Sir Hugo with the lark has left his bed;
'Tis June,—'tis lovers' month,—in short, they wed.
But how? like other people, you suppose,
In silks and state, as all good story goes.
The bridegroom did, and never look'd so well,—
Not e'en when in the shift he fought pell-mell:
But the fair bride, instead of things that bless
Wedding-day eyes, displayed a marvellous dress,—
Marvellous, and homely, and in open sight;
The people were so mov'd, they wept outright.
For lo! with hair let loose about her ears,
And taper in her hand, the fair appears,
And naked feet, a rosy saint at shrift,
And round her bosom hangs the ruddy shift:

Tatter'd it hangs, all cut and carved to rags;
Not fairer droop, when the great organ drags
Its thunders forth, a church's hundred flags.
With glimmering tears she hastens to his feet,
And kneels, and kisses, in the public street;
Then takes his hand, and ere she will arise,
Entreats her pardon at his gracious eyes;
And hopes he will not scorn her love for life,
As his most humble and most honor'd wife.
Awhile her lord, with manly deference, stood
Wrapt in the sweetness of that angel mood;
Then stoop'd, and on her brow his soul impress'd;
And at the altar thus the bride was dress'd."

It has been said, and said truly, that there is no accounting for the imaginations of some people. But writers are not to be supposed to address themselves to people of unaccountable imaginations. They look for their readers among people of sense and feeling.

We had found that the clay soil of St. John's Wood did not agree with us. Or, perhaps, it was only the melancholy state of our fortune: for the New Road, to which we again returned, agreed with us as little. It was there that I thought I should have died, in consequence of the long fatigue which succeeded the working of the *Tatler*.

While in this quarter I received an invitation to write in the new evening paper called *The True Sun*. I did so; but nothing of what I wrote has survived, I believe; nor can I meet with the paper anywhere, to ascertain. Perhaps an essay or two originated in its pages, to which I cannot trace it. I was obliged

for some time to be carried every morning to the *True Sun* office in a hackney-coach. I there became intimate with Laman Blanchard, whose death, not long ago, was such a grief and astonishment to his friends. They had associated anything but such end with his witty, joyous, loving and beloved nature. But the watch was over-wound, and it ran suddenly down. What bright eyes he had! and what a kindly smile! How happy he looked when he thought you were happy; or when he was admiring somebody; or relating some happy story! If suicide, bad as it often is, and full of recklessness and resentment, had not been rescued from indiscriminate opprobrium, Laman Blanchard alone should have rescued it. I never think of him without feeling additional scorn for the hell of the scorner Dante; who has put all suicides into his truly infernal regions, both those who were unjust to others, and those who were unjust only to themselves.*

Let me think of Mr. G., the proprietor of the *True Sun*, whom calamities beset in vain. He seemed as if he could not say Nay to the most provoking of them, out of pure disinclination to the utterance of that monosyllable. G. was one of the

* See the speech of the good Piero delle Vigne, who was driven to kill himself by the envy of those that hated him for fidelity to his master.—*Inferno*, canto xiii.

most gentlemanly of men, with a countenance as dulcet as it was handsome, and a tone of voice to match. Fierce articles would appear in his columns, and he thought he admired them. He even fancied himself the bitter enemy of a brother journalist, whom he supposed to be his own. But it was not in his nature to hate anybody, or to dislike anything but the trouble of disliking it. He was so anxious to be just in his censures, that he would choose the mildest term possible for the most reprobate objects; while, on the other hand, he wished to express himself in terms so exalted, where exaltation was due, that he would fall into the most curious depths of inapplicability, out of the pure meeting of the extremes. Thus, objecting one day to some speculations respecting the Deity, which he conceived to be wanting in due intensity of reverence (though assuredly nothing of the sort was in the minds of the speakers), he said, that he "must really beg leave to doubt, whether the turn which the conversation had taken, was proceeding in a manner quite accordant with the feelings which ought always to be shown towards that—that—that—(labouring as he went, with anxiety to find the proper word)—that—*individual*."

From the noise and dust of the New Road, my family removed to a corner in Chelsea, where the air of the neighbouring river was so refreshing, and the quiet of the "no-thoroughfare" so full of repose, that

although our fortunes were at their worst, and my health almost of a piece with them, I felt for some weeks as if I could sit still for ever, embalmed in the silence. I got to like the very cries in the street, for making me the more aware of it for the contrast. I fancied they were unlike the cries in other quarters of the suburbs, and that they retained something of the old quaintness and melodiousness which procured them the reputation of having been composed by Purcell and others. Nor is this unlikely, when it is considered how fond those masters were of sporting with their art, and setting the most trivial words to music in their glees and catches. The primitive cries of cowslips, primroses, and hot cross-buns seemed never to have quitted this sequestered region. They were like daisies in a bit of surviving field. There was an old seller of fish, in particular, whose cry of "shrimps as large as prawns," was such a regular, long-drawn, and truly pleasing melody, that in spite of his hoarse, and I am afraid, drunken voice, I used to wish for it of an evening, and hail it when it came. It lasted for some years; then faded, and went out; I suppose, with the poor old weather-beaten fellow's existence.

This sense of quiet and repose may have been increased by an early association of Chelsea with something out of the pale; nay, remote. It may seem strange to hear a man who has crossed the

Alps talk of one suburb as being remote from another. But the sense of distance is not in space only; it is in difference and discontinuance. A little back-room in a street in London is farther removed from the noise, than a front-room in a country town. In childhood, the farthest local point which I reached anywhere, provided it was quiet, always seemed to me a sort of end of the world; and I remembered particularly feeling this, the only time when I had previously visited Chelsea, which was at that period of life. So the green rails of the gardens in Paddington seemed as remote as if they were a thousand miles off. They represented all green rails and all gardens, at whatever distance. I have a lively recollection, when a little boy, of having been with my mother one day walking out by Mile End, where there was a mound covering the remains of people who had died in the Plague. The weather had been rainy; and there was a heavy mud in the road, rich with the colour of brown (I suppose Mr. West had put his thought in my head of finding colour in mud. Whoever it was, he did me a great deal of good). I remember to the present day looking at this rich mud colour and admiring it, and seeing the great broad wheels of some waggons go through it, and thinking awfully of the mound, and the plague, and the dead people; always feeling at the same time the delight of being abroad with my mother, with whom

I could have walked through any peril, to say nothing of so many strange satisfactions. Now, this region also looked the remotest in the world. Even the name of "Mile End" had to do with the impression; for it seemed to be, not the end of one mile, but of many; the end of miles in general;—of *all* miles. Measurement itself terminated at that spot. What there was beyond it, I did not conjecture.

I know not whether the corner I speak of remains as quiet as it was. I am afraid not; for steam-boats have carried vicissitude into Chelsea, and Belgravia threatens it with her mighty advent. But to complete my sense of repose and distance, the house was of that old-fashioned sort which I have always loved best, familiar to the eyes of my parents, and associated with childhood. It had seats in the windows, a small third room on the first floor, of which I made a *sanctum*, into which no perturbation was to enter, except to calm itself with religious and cheerful thoughts (a room thus appropriated in a house appears to me an excellent thing); and there were a few lime-trees in front, which in their due season diffused a fragrance.

In this house we remained seven years; in the course of which, besides contributing some articles to the *Edinburgh and Westminster Reviews*, and producing a good deal of the book since called *The Town*, I set up the *London Journal*, endeavoured to

continue the *Monthly Repository*, and wrote the poem entitled *Captain Sword and Captain Pen*, the *Legend of Florence*, and three other plays which are yet unpublished. Here, also, I became acquainted with Thomas Carlyle, one of the kindest and best, as well as most eloquent of men; though in his zeal for what is best he sometimes thinks it incumbent on him to take not the kindest tone, and in his eloquent demands of some hearty uncompromising creed on our parts, he does not quite set the example of telling us the amount of his own. Mr. Carlyle sees that there is a good deal of rough work in the operations of nature: he seems to think himself bound to consider a good deal of it devilish, after the old Covenanter fashion, in order that he may find something angelical in giving it the proper quantity of vituperation and blows; and he calls upon us to prove our energies and our benevolence by acting the part of the wind rather than the sun, of warring rather than peace-making, of frightening and forcing rather than conciliating and persuading. Others regard this view of the one thing needful, however strikingly set forth, as an old and obsolete story, fit only to be finally done with, and not worth the repetition of the old series of reactions, even for the sake of those analogies with the physical economy of the world, which, in the impulse which nature herself gives us towards progression, we are not

bound to suppose everlastingly applicable to its moral and spiritual development. If mankind are destined never to arrive at years of discretion, the admonition is equally well-founded and unnecessary; for the old strife will be continued, at all events, the admonition (at best) being a part of them. And even then, I should say that the world is still a fine, rich, strenuous, beautiful, and desirable thing, always excepting the poverty that starves, and one or two other evils which on no account must we consent to suppose irremediable. But if the case be otherwise, if the hopes which nature herself has put into our hearts be something better than incitements to hopeless action, merely for the action's sake, and this beautiful planet be destined to work itself into such a condition as we feel to be the only fit condition for that beauty, then, I say, with every possible respect for my admirable friend, who can never speak but he is worth hearing, that the tale which he condescends to tell is no better than our old nursery figment of the *Black Man and the Coal-hole*, and that the growing desire of mankind for the cessation of bitterness, and for the prevalence of the sweets of gentleness and persuasion, is an evidence that the time has arrived for dropping the thorns and husks of the old sourness and austerity, and showing ourselves worthy of "the goods the gods provide us."

Mr. Carlyle's antipathy to "shams," is highly estimable and salutary. I wish Heaven may prosper his denouncements of them, wherever they exist. But the danger of the habit of denouncing,—of looking at things from the antipathetic instead of the sympathetic side,—is, that a man gets such a love for the pleasure and exaltation of fault-finding, as tempts him, in spite of himself, to make what he finds; till at length he is himself charged with being a "sham"; that is to say, a pretender to perceptions and virtues which he does not prove, or at best a willing confounder of what differs from modes and appearances of his own, with violations of intrinsical wisdom and goodness. Upon this principle of judgment, nature herself and the universe might be found fault with; and the sun and the stars denounced for appearing no bigger than they do, or for not confining the measure of their operation to that of the taper we read by. Mr. Carlyle adopted a peculiar semi-German style, from the desire of putting thoughts on his paper instead of words, and perhaps of saving himself some trouble in the process. I feel certain that he does it from no other motive; and I am sure he has a right to help himself to every diminution of trouble, seeing how many thoughts and feelings he undergoes. He also strikes an additional blow with the peculiarity, rouses men's attention by it, and helps his rare and

powerful understanding to produce double its effect. It would be hard not to dispense with a few verbs and nominative cases, in consideration of so great a result. Yet, if we were to judge him by one of his own summary processes, and deny him the benefit of his notions of what is expedient and advisable, how could he exculpate this style, in which he denounces so many "shams," of being itself a sham? of being affected, unnecessary, and ostentatious? a jargon got up to confound pretension with performance, and reproduce endless German talk under the guise of novelty?

Thus much in behalf of us dulcet signors of philanthropy, and concederers of good intention, whom Mr. Carlyle is always girding at, and who beg leave to say that they have not confined their lives to words, any more than the utterers of words more potential, but have had their "actions" too, and their sufferings, and even their thoughts, and have seen the faces of the gods of wonder and melancholy; albeit they end with believing them to be phantoms (however useful) of bad health, and think nothing finally potential but gentleness and persuasion.

It has been well said, that love money as people may, there is generally something which they love better: some whim, or hobby-horse; some enjoyment or recreation; some personal, or political, or poetical predilection: some good opinion of this or that class of

men; some club of one's fellows, or dictum of one's own; — with a thousand other *some's* and probabilities. I believe that what Mr. Carlyle loves better than his fault-finding, with all its eloquence, is the face of any human creature that looks suffering, and loving, and sincere; and I believe further, that if the fellow-creature were suffering only, and neither loving nor sincere, but had come to a pass of agony in this life, which put him at the mercies of some good man for some last help and consolation towards his grave, even at the risk of loss to repute, and a sure amount of pain and vexation, that man, if the groan reached him in its forlornness, would be Thomas Carlyle.

The *London Journal* was a miscellany of essays, criticism, and passages from books. Towards the close, it was joined by the *Printing Machine*, but the note which it had struck was of too æsthetical a nature for cheap readers in those days; and after attaining the size of a goodly folio double volume, it terminated. I have since had the pleasure of seeing the major part of the essays renew their life, and become accepted by the public, in a companion volume to the *Indicator*, entitled the *Seer*. But the reputation, as usual, was too late for the profit. Neither the *Seer* nor the *Indicator* are mine.—The *Seer* does not mean a prophet, or one gifted with second sight, but an observer of ordinary things about him, gifted

by his admiration of nature with the power of discerning what everybody else may discern by a cultivation of the like secret of satisfaction. I have been also pleased to see that the *London Journal* maintains a good, steady price with my old friends, the bookstalls. It is in request, I understand, as a book for sea-voyages;, and assuredly its large, triple-columned, eight hundred pages, full of cheerful ethics, of reviews, anecdotes, legends, table-talk, and romances of real life, make a reasonable sort of library for a voyage, and must look pleasant enough, lying among the bulky things upon deck. The *Romances of Real Life* were, themselves, collected into a separate volume. They contain the best things out of the *Lounger's Common-Place Book*, and other curious publications, with the addition of comments by the editor. These romances are as little my property as the books of essays just mentioned: but I venture to think that they are worth recommending for their own sakes, and that the comments contain some of my best reflections.

Alas! whither am I going, thus talking about myself? But I must finish what I have got so far with.

Among the contributors to the *London Journal* was a young friend, who, had he lived, would have been a very distinguished man. I allude to Egerton Webbe, a name well known in private circles of wit

and scholarship. He was a wit of the first water, a scholar writing elegant Latin verse, a writer of the best English style, having philological reason for every word he uttered,—a reasoner, a humourist, a politician, a cosmopolite, a good friend, brother, and son; and to add a new variety to all this, he inherited from his grandfather, the celebrated glee-composer, a genius for musical composition, which in his person took a higher and wider range, being equally adapted for pathos and comedy. He wrote a most humourous farce, both words and music; and he was the author of a strain of instrumental music in the funeral scene of the *Legend of Florence*, which was taken by accomplished ears for a dirge of some Italian master.

Unfortunately, like Beethoven, he was deaf; but so delightful was his conversation, that I was glad to strain my voice for it the whole evening to such an extent, that, on his departure, my head would run round with the dizziness, and I could not go to sleep.

Had he lived, he would have enriched a family too good and trusting for the ordinary course of the world. He died; and their hopes and their elder lives, went with him, till they all meet somewhere again. Dear Egerton Webbe! How astonished E. H. was to see him come into his house with his fair and blooming face, after reading essays and metaphysics, which he took for those of some accomplished old gentleman.

I would not do my friend's memory such disservice as to give the following *jeux d'esprit* by way of opinion of his *powers*. They are samples only of his pastime and trifling. But I fear, that such entertainment as my book may contain, has been growing less and less; and I put them in, that he may still do for me what he has done before—give my jaded spirits a lift.

Scholarly readers know Martial well enough; and therefore they know, that in pouring forth anything which came into his head, bad and good, he is sometimes bad indeed. He realizes his own jest about the would-be sly fellow, who, in order not to be thought poor, pretended a voluntary appearance of poverty. Martial, on these occasions, utters his nothings, with an air as if they were something on that very account; as if they possessed a merit which stood in no need of display. Such are the "epigrams" which my friend bantered in the *London Journal* with the following exquisite imitations. He has not even forgotten (as the Journal observed) the solemn turn of the heads of the epigrams "Concerning Flavius"—On the Same—"To Antonius concerning Lepidus," &c., "nor the ingenious art with which Martial contrives to have a reason asked him, for what he is bent on explaining." The banters, it is true, "have this drawback: that being good jokes upon bad ones, they cannot possibly convey

the same impression;" but the reader is willing to guess it through the wit.

"CONCERNING JONES.

Jones eats his lettuces undress'd;
D' you ask the reason? 'Tis confess'd,—
That is the way Jones likes them best.

TO SMITH, CONCERNING THOMSON.

Smith, Thomson puts no claret on his board;
D' you ask the reason?—Thomson can't afford.

TO GIBBS, CONCERNING HIS POEMS.

You ask me if I think your poems good;
If I could praise your poems, Gibbs,—I would.

CONCERNING THE SAME.

Gibbs says, his poems a sensation make;—
But Gibbs, perhaps, is under a mistake.

TO THOMSON, CONCERNING DIXON AND JACKSON.

How Dixon can with Jackson bear,
You ask me, Thomson, to declare;—
Thomson, Dixon's Jackson's heir."

Were ever three patronymics jumbled so together! or with such a delightful importance? It is like the jingling of the money in Jackson's pocket.

How strange to sit laughing at my fireside over these epigrams, while he that wrote them, instead of coming to drink tea with me, is . .

But we are all bound somewhere together, as the sun and the planets are bound in one direction towards another part of the heavens; and the intervals between the departures of the dead and the living are very small.

The *London Journal* was followed by the produc-

tion of *Captain Sword and Captain Pen*;—a poem which, poem though it was, and one which gave me a sense of my advance in imaginative culture, and consequent power of expression, nothing but a sense of duty could have enabled me to persist in writing. I have implied this before; but I will now state, for reasons which may be of service, that I was several times forced to quit my task by accesses of wonder and horror so overwhelming, as to make me burst out in perspirations (a thing very difficult in me to produce), and that nothing but the physical relief thus afforded me, the early mother-taught lesson of subjecting the one to the many, and perhaps the habit of thinking the best in worst, and believing that everything would, somehow or other, come right at last, could have given me courage enough to face the subject again.

I remember three passages in particular, which tried me to a degree almost unbearable. One was that in which the shriek of the horse is noticed; another the description of the bridegroom lying by the ditch, sabred, and calling for water; and the third, the close of the fourth canto, where the horriblest thing occurs, that maddens a taken city. Men of action are too apt to think that an author, and especially a poet, dares and undergoes nothing as he peacefully sits by his fireside "indulging his muse." But the muse is sometimes an awful divinity. With truest

devotion, and with dreadful necessity for patience, followed by what it prayed for, were the last three lines of that canto written.* Not that the trusting belief, for which I owe an unceasing debt of gratitude to my parents, failed me then or ever; but all the horror of wonder (and in such visitations wonder is a very horrible thing), passed over me with its black burthen; and I looked back on it, as one might look upon the passage of some tremendous spirit, whose beneficence, though you still believed in it, had taken that astounding shape. Firmly do I believe, that all such sufferings, — and far worse, those under the very imagination of which they suffer, — are for the very best and happiest ends, whatever may be the darkness which they cast on one as they go.

It was in that persuasion, as well as from need of relief, and for the due variation of my theme, that I intermingled these frightful scenes with passages of military gaiety, of festive enjoyment, and even of pleasantry; such as the description of the soldier's march, of the entertainments given to Captain Sword, and of the various dances in the ball-room;—

> "The country-dance, small of taste;
> And the waltz, that loveth the lady's waist;
> And the gallopade, strange agreeable tramp,
> Made of a scrape, a hobble, and stamp" &c.

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* "Oh God! let me breathe, and look up at thy sky.
Good is as hundreds, evil as one:
Round about goeth the golden sun."

Gibbon said, that his having been a captain of militia was of use to him in writing his great work. With due feelings of subordination to the captain, I can say, that my having been a private in a regiment of volunteers was of use to me in performing this painful duty.

> "Steady! steady!—the masses of men
> Wheel, and fall in, and wheel again,
> Softly as circles drawn with pen."

I had been a part of the movement, and felt how soft and orderly it was.

> "Now for the flint, and the cartridge bite;
> Darkly gathers the breath of the fight,
> Salt to the palate, and stinging to sight."

Many a cartridge had I bitten, and thus learned the salt to that dreadful dinner.

It was about this time that I projected a poem of a very different sort, which was to be called *A Day with the Reader*. I proposed to invite the reader to breakfast, dine, and sup with me, partly at home, and partly at a country inn, in order to vary the circumstances. It was to be written both gravely and gaily, in an exalted or in a lowly strain, according to the topics of which it treated. The fragment on Paganini was a part of the exordium:

> "So play'd of late to every passing thought
> With finest change (might I but half as well
> So write!) the pale magician of the bow," &c.

I wished to write in the same manner, because

Paganini, with his violin, could move both the tears and the laughter of his audience, and (as I have described him doing in the verses) would now give you the notes of birds in trees, and even hens feeding in a farm-yard (which was a corner into which I meant to take my companion), and now melt you into grief and pity, or mystify you with witchcraft, or put you into a state of lofty triumph like a conqueror. That phrase of "smiting" the chords,—

> "He smote;—and clinging to the serious chords
> With godlike ravishment," &c.

was no classical commonplace; nor, in respect to impression on the mind, was it exaggeration to say, that from a single chord he would fetch out

> "The voice of quires, and weight
> Of the built organ."

Paganini, the first time I saw and heard him, and the first moment he struck a note, seemed literally to strike it; to give it a blow. The house was so crammed, that, being among the squeezers in "standing room" at the side of the pit, I happened to catch the first sight of his face through the arm-a-kimbo of a man who was perched up before me, which made a kind of frame for it; and there, on the stage, in that frame, as through a perspective glass, were the face, bust, and raised hand, of the wonderful musician, with his instrument at his chin, just going to commence, and looking exactly as I have described him.

"His hand,
Loading the air with dumb expectancy,
Suspended, ere it fell, a nation's breath.

He *smote*;—and clinging to the serious chords
With godlike ravishment, drew forth a breath,—
So deep, so strong, so fervid thick with love,—
Blissful, yet laden as with twenty prayers,
That Juno yearn'd with no diviner soul
To the first burthen of the lips of Jove.

The exceeding mystery of the loveliness
Sadden'd delight; and with his mournful look,
Dreary and gaunt, hanging his pallid face
'Twixt his dark flowing locks, he almost seem'd,
To feeble or to melancholy eyes,
One that had parted with his soul for pride,
And in the sable secret liv'd forlorn."

To show the depth and identicalness of the impression which he made on everybody, foreign or native, an Italian who stood near me, said to himself, after a sigh, "Oh Dio!" and this had not been said long, when another person, in the same manner, uttered the words, "Oh Christ!" Musicians pressed forward from behind the scenes, to get as close to him as possible; and they could not sleep at night for thinking of him.

I have mentioned the *Monthly Repository*. It was originally a magazine in the Unitarian interest, and contained admirable papers by the present member for Oldham, Mr. John Mill, and others; but it appeared, so to speak, in one of the least though most respectable corners of influence, and never obtained the repute it deserved. Nor, if such writers as these

failed to counteract the drawback, could it be expected that others would help it better. The author of *Orion* made the attempt in vain; and so did the last of its editors, the present writer, though Landor assisted him. In this publication, like better things before it, was sunk "*Blue Stocking Revels*, or the *Feast of the Violets*"—a kind of female *Feast of the Poets*, which nobody took any notice of; though I had the pleasure of hearing, that a venerable living poet said it would have been sufficient "to set up half a dozen young men about town in a reputation for wit and fancy."

As Apollo in the *Feast of the Poets* gave a dinner to those gentlemen, in *Blue-Stocking Revels* he gives a ball and supper to literary ladies. The guests were so numerous as to call forth a pleasant remark from Lord Holland, who, in a letter in which he acknowledged the receipt of the poem, said, that "the inspector of blue ankles under Phœbus" had, he perceived, "no sinecure." I believe the fair guests were not dissatisfied with their entertainment. It was thought by somebody, that objection was intended to Mrs. Somerville, because it was said of her, that

> "Instead of the little Loves, laughing at colleges,
> Round her, in doctors' caps, flew little Knowledges."

But I did not mean to imply, either that the lady's knowledge was little, or that she was not a very amiable person. It was only a commonplace jest in a new

shape. Perhaps it ought to have been followed by a recommendation to look into the faces of the "little Knowledges"; who are apt to have more love in them, than people suspect.

A bookseller objected to publishing this poem on a very different account. He thought that Lady Blessington would take offence at the mention of her "shoulders," and at being called a "Venus grown fat."

"'Lady Blessington!' cried the glad usher aloud,
As she swam through the doorway, like moon from a cloud.
I know not which most her face beam'd with,—fine creature!
Enjoyment, or judgment, or wit, or good nature.
Perhaps you have known what it is to feel longings
To pat buxom shoulders at routs and such throngings;—
Well,—think what it was, at a vision like that!
A Grace after dinner!—a Venus grown fat!"

It would be strange if any lady, grown stout, would object to being thought a Venus notwithstanding: and it would be still stranger, if after having her face lauded for so many fine qualities, she should object to having her shoulders admired. Lady Blessington, at all events, had too much understanding to make such a mistake; and, though I had not the h our of her acquaintance, I had good reason to know that she took the passage in anything but an offensive light. Let me take this opportunity of saying that her ladyship's account of Lord Byron is by far the best and most sensible I am acquainted with. Her writings indeed, throughout, are remarkable for a judgment as well as kindness, for which many would not give credit to an envied beauty.

CHAPTER XXV.

PLAY-WRITING.—CONCLUSION.

Difficulty of meeting the literary requirements of times and editors. —Play-writing and present condition of the stage.—Actors out of their place as managers.—Reason why their profession is not more esteemed.—Delusions practised by them respecting the "Shakspearean," the "legitimate," and the "national" drama.—Only remedy for such abuses.—The Legend of Florence, *and four other dramas by the Author.—Lord Melbourne and the Author's pension.—Ideas associated in the latter's mind with the Queen.—Amateur acting. — Removal to Kensington. — Author's latest productions and daily habits.—Question of the Laureateship.—Political and religious opinions.*

Poem f the kind just mentioned were great solaces to care; but the care was great notwithstanding. I felt age coming on me, and difficulties not lessened by failing projects: nor was I able, had I been never so inclined, to render my faculties profitable "in the market." It is easy to say to a man,—Write such and such a thing, and it is sure to sell. Watch the public taste, and act accordingly.

Care not for original composition; for inventions or theories of your own; for æsthetics, which the many will be slow to apprehend. Stick to the works of others. Write only in magazines and reviews. Or if you must write things of your own, compile. Tell anecdotes. Reproduce histories and biographies. Do anything but write to the few, and you may get rich.

There is a great deal of truth in all this. But a man can only do what he can, or as others will let him. Suppose he has a conscience that will not suffer him to reproduce the works of other people, or even to speak what he thinks commonplace enough to have become common property. Suppose this conscience will not allow him to accommodate himself to the opinion of editors and reviewers. Suppose the editors and reviewers themselves will not encourage him to write on the subjects he understands best, perhaps do not understand the subjects themselves; or at best, play with him, and delay him, and keep him only as a resource when their own circle fails them. Suppose he has had to work his way up through animosities, political and religious, and through such clouds of adversity as, even when they have passed away, leave a chill of misfortune round his repute, and make "prosperity" slow to encourage him. Suppose, in addition to all this, he is in bad health, and of fluctuating, as well

as peculiar powers; of a temperament easily solaced in mind, and as easily drowsed in body; quick to enjoy every object in creation, everything in nature and in art, every sight, every sound, every book, picture, and flower, and at the same time really qualified to do nothing, but either to preach the enjoyment of those objects in modes derived from his own particular nature and breeding, or to suffer with mingled cheerfulness and poverty the consequences of advocating some theory on the side of human progress. Great may sometimes be the misery of that man under the necessity of requesting forbearance or undergoing obligation; and terrible will be his doubts, whether some of his friends may not think he had better have had a conscience less nice, or an activity less at the mercy of his *physique*. He will be forced to seek his consolation in what can be the only final consolation of any one who needs a charitable construction; namely, that he has given what he would receive.

I did not understand markets; I could not command editors and reviewers; I therefore obeyed a propensity which had never forsaken me, and wrote a play. Plays are delightful things to write, and tempting things in the contemplation of their profits. They seem to combine the agreeable and the advantageous beyond any other mode of recruiting an author's finances.

"Little knows he of Calista." No man, I believe at least in England, ever delivered himself from difficulties by writing plays. He may live by the stage as actor, or as manager, or as author of all work; that is to say, as one who writes entirely for the actors, and who takes every advantage of times and seasons, and the inventions of other men. But if his heroes are real heroes, and not Jones; or real heroines, and not Mrs. Smith or Mrs. Thomson; in other words, if he thinks only of nature while he draws them, and not of the wishes and self-loves of the reigning performers, the latter will have nothing to say to him. He must either concoct his plays under their direction, and for their sole personal display (for in other respects the advice of the actor is desirable), or he must wait for the appearance of some manager who is at once literary and independent, and no actor himself; and that is a thing which does not occur perhaps twice in a century.

But I anticipate.—I wrote the *Legend of Florence;* and though it was rejected at one theatre, I had reason to congratulate myself on its fortune at another. Not that it did for me what I was told it might have done, had I let the husband retain his wife, or had less money perhaps been laid out in its "getting up"; but it produced me two hundred pounds, which was a great refreshment to my sorry purse; it gave me exquisite pleasure in the writing;

it received the approbation of the entire weekly and monthly press (at least I believe so, and I am sure Christopher North graced it with a whole article), and lastly, it received crown upon crown in the presence, twice over (a rare movement in royalty), of her Majesty and Prince Albert, the former of whom was pleased to express her satisfaction with it to the manager, and the latter to a great statesman, who was so kind as to let me know it.

I owe the performance of this play, first to a late excellent actress and woman, Mrs. Orger, whom I had the pleasure of knowing, and who obtained it a hearing from Mr. and Mrs. Matthews (Madame Vestris); secondly, to the zealous interest taken in it by those two cordial persons; and lastly, to the talents and sympathy of Miss Ellen Tree (Mrs. Kean), the tears down whose glowing cheeks encouraged me while it was read, and who has since told me that she regarded my heroine as her best performance.

I have since written four more dramatic pieces of which the public know nothing; one, a blank verse play in five acts; another, also blank verse, in three acts; the third, a mixed piece of verse and prose, in two acts; and the fourth, a farce or petty comedy, also in two acts. In one of these pieces, Mrs. Kean has taken voluntary and repeated interest; of another, she has spoken in the highest terms; a third is in the hands of Mrs. Mowatt, whose goodwill to it was

rendered of no avail, by the closing of the theatre which she graced; and the fourth has been nearly two years in the hands of an applauding manager. Taking the pieces altogether, I have been nine years attempting in vain to get them acted.

How is this to be explained, "errors excepted"; that is to say, mistakes of an author's self-love apart? I think I can explain it, and I will do so.

Actors are a pleasant generation, especially comic actors. They are, for the most part, fond of their profession, intelligent, good-natured, humorous, full of sport and play, jealous of, yet generous to their companions, and liberal in their opinions, though with a leaning, for obvious reasons, to power and patronage. Instinctive and just indulgence is shown them by society on the score of morals, in consequence of their liability to temptation; and it is one of the evidences of advanced opinion, and creditable to the aristocracy, that marriages from the stage with nobility and gentry have been more handsomely treated within the last fifty years, than before the French Revolution.

On the other hand, the leaning of actors towards power and patronage, is sometimes apt to degenerate into servility, and sometimes into double dealing; the courtesy waxing and waning, in proportion to the wealth or supposed influence of its object. They are

seldom well bred; have often (very excusably, considering the personal applause they receive) too much vanity and self-importance, particularly tragic actors, who deal in solemn words; and notwithstanding their better treatment by society, the profession in general have this great drawback, both in their own instinctive estimation, and that of the public,—that the footing on which the best of them stand with society, is never very sure or comfortable; the most respectable, even when men of genius, seldom being admitted into the first circles in private, and never in public; and the humblest being considered as no better than vagabonds and buffoons.

The reason of this is, not as people suppose, the buffoonery itself, or the want of morals; for Garrick could play the buffoon for his great friends, and plenty of immorality is received everywhere. It lies in an instinctive, though unconscious understanding on all sides, that a talent for the stage is not the rare or great thing which it is supposed to be, but that it abounds undeveloped in all quarters of society. And such is the fact. Children have it. Schoolboys exhibit it. Amateurs often manifest it to an amount which only requires cultivation to render it superior to anything on the boards. "*Totus mundus agit histrionem.*"

"All the world's a stage,
And all the men and women merely players."

A born genius, like Garrick or Edmund Kean, would be a rarity always; but there is reason to believe, that even "stars" like those would multiply under the inspector's tube: and as to anything less brilliant, with the exception of the very greatest comedians, who are also born geniuses in their way, and have original personal humours, they might be manufactured by thousands out of the nebulæ of the ordinary capabilities which lie crowded everywhere. The most respectable performers, out of the pale of genius, are in general not to be compared with men of ordinary critical perception or scholarly acquirement; and they are almost entirely made up of theatrical training, and of what has been said and done before them.

As the dramatist, however, can be read all the world over for nothing, while the actor who personates his characters, and who, perhaps, does nothing but imposingly misrepresent them, cannot even be seen under a shilling, often for not less than four or five shillings, actors get rich while dramatists remain poor: and the consequence is, that, forgetting what the circles never forget, and what they themselves may have read in histories of balancers of straws and professors of legerdemain, they confound riches with merit, assume the dictatorship in the admission and rejection of plays, and even undertake to patronise Shakspeare, and to uphold the "legitimate" and

"national" dramas. Such men of letters as condescend to serve to this delusion, or who serve to it without feeling the condescension, know not, in either case, what they are doing, and how much they injure others and themselves.

Actors know little, and generally care nothing, about the drama, legitimate or illegitimate. Their only one object in life, with the exception of a few enjoying spirits among them (and they plentifully partake it), is to keep themselves, as they phrase it, "before the lamps"; that is to say, in the eyes of the audience, and in the receipt of personal applause. The feeling is very natural and pardonable, for the reason already given. The community get a great deal of good and entertainment by it; the actor gets money, and fame besides, after its sort, for want of a better; and no harm would ensue to anybody, if the interests of the drama were not cunningly confounded in the public mind with the ascendancy of the green-room.

There never was a greater delusion than what has been practised upon the public of late years, in connection with the fine-sounding phrases, "Shakspearian," "legitimate," and "national" dramas. When an actor tells you that he loves Shakspeare, and that he will see justice done to his wonderful dramas, he means that he is in love with himself, and intends to monopolize all the principal characters. When he

talks of the "legitimate" drama, he means that he will perform as many old plays as possible, in order to avoid paying for new ones; and when actors moaned and roared the other day over the downfall that was coming to the "national" drama, because more French actors proposed to amuse us, going even to the foot of the throne "*in formâ pauperis*," and saying that the bread would be taken out of their mouths, they meant, that they should not monopolize the French drama itself in translations, and grow rich at the expense of the national dramatists. The throne which had too many graver matters on its hands to have considered the question, listened with its usual gracious good-nature to the poor flourishing players, who had thus dressed themselves in their pauper garb for the occasion, and the doors of the very court were thrown open to them, as though they could not find a barn into which to put their heads; so they went home to their suppers rejoicing, and next day perhaps insulted one of the writers of the drama which they pretended to be upholding. With far better reason, could dramatists have thought it became them in the eyes of their royal mistress, might *they* have requested her Majesty to look into the conduct and real condition of these her "servants" the actors, and signify her pleasure that they should cease to combine censorship with acting, and a monoply of the stage exchequer to all but the few

of their own profession, with mockery to the national dramatist.

Accusation is not here intended against every one who was a party to this preposterous movement. Some of them had really done what they could for the drama, till they found that the French drama cost them less; others laughed at the movement themselves; but none of them were sincere, except in their fright. They were like children who had got a cake to themselves which did not belong to them, and then were enraged with the naughty Frenchman from whose shop they had stolen it, and who only proposed to them to let him partake.

Actors, of course, reply to authors, that authors can lie under delusions as well as other men, and that their productions are not to be held suitable to the stage, merely because they think so. Nothing can be more true. The point is to be conceded in candour, and would be conceded with pleasure, if it had not always been taken and acted upon with every kind of assumption. But the truism does not alter that assumption, or make it less ridiculous. The other day an actor talked of being beset by "maniac" authors; and he was at the very instant straining himself to pull a house over his head after the usual legitimate fashion; which he did. Every other actor, of course, pronounced him a simpleton;

and would have done it himself next day; perhaps had done it, in metropolis or barn.

The whole stage, for many years past, has been "stage" and little else, even when Shakspeare himself has seemed to be most attended to. Should authors have the luck to have a play accepted which is neither a farce nor from the French, they are told that they would be paid better if their piece did not take so much in the "getting up"; that is to say, in setting off the actors and the scenery. Shakspeare himself must have his visions realized, though it is impossible to do so; and spectacles, full of gorgeous error, are substituted for appeals to the imagination, in order that the manager may be complimented as showman, and the imagination of dramatists in future limited to the powers of his scene-painters and machinists; for how would Shakspeare have ventured upon his witches that vanish, or his spirits that "live under the blossom", and ride upon the bat, if he had written for actors who swallowed up his money in the invention of machinery to misrepresent those creatures, and of landscapes, which however charming, are other men's pictures and not his poetry? But this is the least of the abuses; and the author himself, perhaps, is too much pleased at the moment in finding his productions so adorned; especially as money is never the first thing in his mind, and he flatters himself that the poetry and

the passion must needs be attended to, for which so much appears to be done. Dramatists as well as actors, no doubt, have their delusions, nor deluded or otherwise, would they change places with those flourishing repeaters of their words, any more than the performer would change places with the scene-shifter. But it is a long while since truth has been told in these matters, and it is high time that it should speak.

The stage will never be in proper condition till actors cease to be censors of plays; till the receipts of the theatre are taken out of their hands, to be divided more equably with their industrious brethren by a manager who is not an actor; and till the manager himself be a man who combines love of the drama with reading, with scholarship, and with true critical discernment. Reading he must have, in order to know what has been written before; scholarship, in order to judge even the verbal requisites of style; and true critical discernment, in order to estimate the different claims and feasibilities of the pieces offered him. Or granting that scholarship may be dispensed with, the rest is absolutely necessary. Such a man would distribute their parts to the respective performers without waiting for their egotistical judgments. He would proportion salaries to merits, and not to vanities; he would, consequently, afford to bring out new pieces as well as old, and theatres

would again flourish, because they were conducted on the principles of equity and common sense.

A manager confessed the other day, that he would never bring out a new piece, if he could help it, as long as he could make money enough by old ones. He laughed at every idea of a management but a commercial one; and held at nought the public wish for novelty, provided he could get as many persons to come to his theatre as would fill it. Being asked why he brought out anything new, when such were his opinions, he complained, that people connected with the press forced the compositions of themselves and their friends upon him; and being asked what he meant by "forced," he replied, that the press would make a dead set at his theatre if he acted otherwise, and so ruin him.

The press, indeed, have not been guiltless in respect to the present state of the drama. Its criticism for many years past, as far as I am aware, has not been independent, and at all events it has been light and careless. It has been made a matter either of personal intercourse, or of mere facility for playgoing and command of orders; things "all very well," as the phrase is, both for critics and actors, as long as the former are jovial, good-natured men, who never think of the consequences in other respects, or who cannot discern them; but extremely pernicious to the final interests of all par-

ties connected with the drama, not excepting those whom they at once enrich and spoil; for their worst faults of pride and temper are flattered into excess; they are made conscious parties to a delusion; and their prosperity is rendered at best uneasy.

As to the dramatist, he, if he is worthy of the name, does not desire to be rich. Riches are neither necessary to his self-esteem, nor do they lie in the direction of his ambition. He only wishes to be relieved from the alternative of being no dramatist at all, in the sense of one who writes for the stage; or of continuing to be at the mercy of those, his stage organs, who without him are nothing.

The propensity to dramatic writing has been strong in me from boyhood. I began to indulge it before my youthful criticisms on the theatres. Theatres gave me an insight into plot and conduct, and I continued to write plays in private till repeated failures, in my own critical judgment, forced me to conclude I must be mistaken in supposing that I had any call for it. The propensity, however, came again with great fervour upon me, when I was moved to write the *Legend of Florence*. I wrote the play in six weeks, in a state of delightful absorption, notwithstanding the nature of the story, and of the cares which beset me; and it succeeded only to make me fail in a new way; that is to say, in vainly trying to get four other suc-

cessive pieces performed. Those pieces are called *The Secret Marriage*, which is the play I have mentioned as being in blank verse and five acts; *Lovers' Amazements*, the blank verse play in three acts; *The Double*, the piece of mixed prose and verse in two; and *Look to your Morals*, the prose afterpiece, or petty comedy.

The *Secret Marriage* is the story of a Prince of Navarre, whose marriage with a lady not of blood royal is resented by an envious nobility. It is founded on the celebrated history of Ines de Castro, of which, indeed, I first intended it to consist; but in these effeminate days of the drama, I found that its tragical termination would not be endured. At least the actors told me so. I said, that I had not intended to crown her dead body (which was what her husband actually did, forcing the nobles who assassinated her to attend the ceremony), my design was to crown her coffin; which is done in the *Secret Marriage;* though matters in that play, in deference to modern requirement, are still brought happily about. I confess, that both as a critic and an Englishman, I am ashamed of this alleged weakness on the part of the British public; this charge of not being able to endure a strong sensation, however salutary. Nor do I believe it. The strong Saxon people, who have carried the world before them, are not the audiences to quail before a tragedy. The

only point is how to set it truly and nobly before them; and, not in that gratuitous and vulgar style of horror, which it becomes manhood to repudiate. How is it that they endure Othello and Lear? "Oh!" but say the actors, "that is Shakspeare's writing." Yes; and thus, like the cunning priests of a faith which they dishonour, they make a bugbear as well as a business of their idol; as if all worship of the true and beautiful were to fail in its effects with others, because they are without it themselves. I have heard actors themselves say, notwithstanding this esoterical religion of theirs, that Shakspeare himself would be damned to-morrow if he were to write now. The *Secret Marriage* was rejected by the same manager that rejected the *Legend of Florence;* which is perhaps a good omen, if I could get it performed. But then it "costs money," pathetically say these caterers for the public amusement.

Lovers' Amazements is an imbroglio of two ladies and two gentlemen, who are constantly undergoing surprises, which make them doubt the fidelity or the regard of one another. But then, in this beautiful modern state of the British theatres, I am asked, with the like pathos, where are two gentleman actors and two lady actresses to be found, who could, or, if they could, would perform a play in which they are all four put on a level perhaps in point of intel-

lectual pretension. In vain I answer that one charming actress took singular pains to get it performed, and that another would have had it performed, but for the closing of her theatre. I am defied to get four gentlefolks of the stage together, or any four together competent to perform the parts. How different from what I have seen in former days!

The *Double* is founded on a story, from the Italian novelists, of a clever fisherman, who bears so strong a resemblance to a gentleman who is drowned, while bathing in his company, that he is tempted to personate the deceased, and to take possession of his house. To render the personation more probable, I turned the fisherman into an actor. But this piece also was objected to on the score of its not being thoroughly "pleasant." That, according to the actors, is the great requisite now with the robust British public. You must make everything "pleasant" to them;—give them nothing but sops and honey. At least, in polite theatres. You may frighten the people in the Borough; but you must not think of startling the nerves of the aristocracy.

The two principal characters in *Look to your Morals*, are an English valet, and a French damsel whom he has married. He is very jealous; and in order to keep down the attractiveness of her animal spirits, he has told her that there is nothing but the most rigid propriety in England, both in morals

and demeanour, and that she is to regulate her behaviour accordingly. The girl, who is a very innocent girl, believes him; and the consequence is, that she has to undergo a series of attentions, which very much open her French eyes. I know not how far the impression of this is to rank with the "*unpleasant*" things, that are not to be risked with the British public. The stage, to be sure, is so much in the habit of pampering the national self-love, especially on the side of its virtues and respectability, and this, too, at the expense of our lively neighbours, that I can suppose it possible for a theatre to see some danger in it. At all events, the manager in whose hands it has been put, keeps it by him as safe as gunpowder.

About a dozen years ago, in consequence of disappointments of this kind, and of those before mentioned, some friends renewed an application to Lord Melbourne, which they had made in the reign previous. It was thought that my sufferings in the cause of reform, and my career as a man of letters, rendered me not undeserving a pension. His lordship received both the applications with a courtesy which he does not appear to have shown in quarters where the interest might have been thought greater; but the pension was not granted. Perhaps the courtesy was on that account. Perhaps he gave my friends these and other evidence of his good-will towards

me, knowing that he should advise nothing further; for I had twice during his administration received grants from the Royal Bounty Fund, of two hundred pounds each; once during the reign of King William, and the second after the accession of her Majesty. It subsequently turned out, that Lord Melbourne considered it proper for no man to have a pension given him by one sovereign, who had been condemned in a court of law for opposing another. I will not say "libelling," for Lord Melbourne's friends, and perhaps himself when a young wit, had plentifully libelled sovereign people. Had I been acquitted by the Carlton-House judge's grand-jury, the "libel" would have gone for nothing. The reason, in fact, was so futile, and indeed so dangerous to royalty itself and its hold upon the affections, considering that a man may oppose one sovereign out of the very feelings which render him the devoted subject of another (which was the case in this very instance), that a more reflecting minister did not choose to abide by it, and the pension, as the reader has seen, was subsequently given me. I have stated the circumstance, and my feelings about it, in a previous volume. I will take the opportunity of adding, that nothing could be more disinterested than the rise of my attachment to Queen Victoria. I had always, as a public writer, treated King William with the respect, and even the zeal,

due to the sovereign who had countenanced reform, and who was a man of an almost entirely different sort from the prince who preceded him; but the death of the mother of his children in a foreign land, and under circumstances of adversity, could never make me take to him with thorough personal cordiality. I do not presume to judge his conduct on that occasion:—first, because I do not know all the circumstances; secondly, because he took no positive steps towards the exile himself, as far as I then knew; thirdly, because he certainly took no such steps as George the Fourth did towards his poor wife (not, indeed, that there seems to have been any pretence of reason for his so doing); and, lastly, because the mother herself is understood to have defended him against his impugners (good and noble conduct in her, at all events, and such as might have been expected from her charming acting). But all which I saw and heard of his Majesty's heiress-presumptive had touched me on points which readers of this personal history will not be slow to understand. I had seen her, when a child, walk lovingly hand-in-hand with a female of her own age, which made me think she partook of my own childhood's notion of friendship. I afterwards heard some "romantic" stories (or what those who are not lovers might call such) of the evidences of her mutual regard for her cousin, which reminded

me (for what does the heart think of rank in such cases?) of my own first loving attachment. I beheld her, as it were, always in company, either with friendship, or with love, or with her mother; under which third aspect she was also associated with the earliest of my affections; and when this personage, thus interesting to me, came to be a sovereign, I found her twice coming with her husband to see the play of the poor battered author that loved her, and who would have given half its profits to have been able to tell her what he felt.

Does anybody take this for exaggeration or sentimentality? Let him not do so, for his own sake; for in confining sincerity to his own modes of feeling, or to his own measure of evidence, he may only be forced to discover how far he may fall short of an exaltation sincerer. I say this for particular reasons, which will be seen presently.

Simultaneous with the latest movement about the pension, was one on the part of my friend Dickens and others, who, combining kindly purpose with an amateur inclination for the stage, had condescended to show to the public what excellent actors they could have been, had they so pleased,—what excellent actors, indeed, some of them were. They were of opinion that a benefit for myself at one of the metropolitan theatres would be a dishonour on neither side. A testimonial of a different sort,

which had been proposed by some other friends, was superseded by this form of one; and preparations were being accordingly made, when the grant of the pension seemed to render it advisable that the locality of the benefit should be transferred from London to a provincial stage, in acknowledgment to the superior boon, and for the avoidance of all appearance of competing with it. The result was still of great use to me, and my name was honoured in a manner I shall never forget by an address from the pens of Mr. Serjeant (now Justice) Talfourd and Sir Edward Bulwer, and the plaudits of Birmingham and Liverpool.

If anything had been needed to show how men of letters include actors, on the common principle of the greater including the less, these gentlemen would have furnished it; and this, too, to a negative as well as positive extent, of which they were probably not aware; for where they failed most, except from pure inexperience, was in the imitation which they condescended to make of actors themselves; while, in their own peculiar merits, they not only equalled the best reigning actors, but sometimes surpassed them. Part of Mr. Dickens's *Bobadil* had a spirit in it of intellectual apprehension beyond anything the existing stage has shown: his farce throughout was admirable,—quite rich and filled up: and Mr. Forster delivered the verses of

Ben Jonson with a musical flow, and a sense of their grace and beauty, absolutely unknown to existing stage recitation. At least I have never heard anything like it since Edmund Kean's. The lines came out of his lips as if he loved them,—not hacked and hewed into fragments, in order to conceal insensibility to their beauty with shows of passion. I allude particularly, in this instance, to his performance of the "Younger Brother." But he did it always, when sweet verse required it.

Meantime, I had removed from Chelsea with my family to the place where I now live; and, though my health has not bettered, as I hoped it to be, by the change, but, on the contrary, has been worse in respect to body than I ever experienced, and shown me the formidable line that is drawn between being elderly and being old (and one single illness drew it), yet I love Kensington, in spite of its want of fields, and persuade myself that I may still rally, and get another "lease" when I move, as I mean to do to some higher ground than the spot we occupy; for we unfortunately came into a place which has got into the books of the Sanitary Commissioners; and it is lucky that we have escaped the consequences with anything short of death. The district has now been improved, is improving, and I have no doubt will be thoroughly cured; but people do not willingly remain where they have so suffered; and change of air

is a desideratum which all should have, if they could get it. Ultimately, I have no doubt they will, thanks to new inventions; and this beautiful globe be known, as it ought to be, by all its inhabitants. Let the imagination of him who thinks otherwise sit for ever with his unadvancing legs in the ditches of his ancestors, the ancient Britons. We have assuredly got beyond Ditchington since their time; but Heavisides has a right to think he can get no further.

Here, at Kensington, sometimes in the Gardens, sometimes in the quondam Nightingale-lane of Holland House (now shut up), I have had the pleasure of composing the *Palfrey*, the scenes of which are partly laid in the place. Here (with the exception of a short interval at Wimbledon) I wrote, besides reviews and shorter articles, one of the dramatic pieces above mentioned, the criticism in *Imagination and Fancy*, and *Wit and Humour*; the *Stories from the Italian Poets*; the *Jar of Honey*; the criticism in the *Book for a Corner*; a portion of the *Town* (most of which had been produced long before); and lastly, the greater part of the work which the reader is now perusing. It was at the close of the second volume of the Italian Stories, that I had the severe illness of which I have spoken. I had opposed a lethargic tendency to which I am subject, the consequence of hepatitis, with too free a use of coffee, which ended in a dangerous attack of the loins, the effects of

which appear to be irrecoverable; but I shall hope otherwise as long as I can. A friend, the late estimable Mr. Stritch, who often looked in upon me and found me sitting with cold feet, and with a bust, as it were, on fire, repeatedly warned me of what would happen; but I am sanguine, and was foolish, and down I went. I used to envy my friend for his being able to walk leisurely in and out, and thought how sure he was of living beyond me. And now he is unexpectedly gone. Too many of such surprises have I had; but there is always good of some kind in evil. My friend's last moments were as brief as they were unlooked for. I had also another consolation during my illness. It has so happened that several of my illnesses have taken place after I had been writing on matters connected with religion, and in those cases I have always had the comfort of knowing that I had been doing my best to combat superstition. In the present instance, I had been attacking the infernal opinions of Dante;—a task which no respect for his genius, or false considerations for the times in which he lived (for others who lived in them were above them), can ever make me regard but as a duty and a glory; for though I acknowledge the true part of might to be right, yet might of any sort never so much astonished me as that I could not discern in it what was not might; and Dante's venturing on his ghastly visions did not

blind me to that false support and intoxicating spirit of vindictiveness, which enabled him to do it. Dante (alas! that such a conjunction should be possible) was one of the greatest poets and most childishly mistaken men that ever existed; and if it requires an audacity like his own to say it—here it is.

One more book I have written, small, and still in manuscript, which I can take no pride in,—which I desire to take no pride in,—and yet which I hold dearer than all the rest. I have mentioned a book called *Christianism, or Belief and Unbelief Reconciled,* which I wrote in Italy. The contents of that book, modified, are appended to the one I speak of; and the latter has the same object as the former, with better provision for practical result; that is to say, it proposes to supply, not thoughts and aspirations only, but a definite faith, and a daily set of duties, to such humble, yet un-abject, and truly religious souls, as cannot accept unintelligible and unworthy ties of conscience, and yet feel both their weakness and their earnestness with sufficient self-knowledge to desire ties of conscience, both as bonds and encouragements. Some friends and myself are in accord upon the principles of this book; it has done us good for a sufficient length of time to make us think it would do good to others; and its publication, before long, is contemplated accordingly. Meanwhile I shall say no more about it, but this;—that at

no time will any name or names be put to it, the book pretending to be nothing but an eclectical presentment of such helps to good intention, as have already been furnished to mankind by the divine spirits that have appeared among them, and controversy being one of its things prohibited.

With the occasional growth of this book, with the production of others from necessity, with the solace of verse, and with my usual experience of sorrows and enjoyments, of sanguine hopes and bitter disappointments, of bad health and almost unconquerable spirits (for though my old hypochondria never returns, I sometimes undergo pangs of unspeakable will and longing, on matters which elude my grasp), I have now passed, in one sequestered tenor of life, almost the whole lapse of years since I lost my friend in Italy. The same unvaried day sees me reading or writing, ailing, jesting, reflecting, rarely stirring from home but to walk, interested in public events, in the progress of society, in the "New Reformation" (most deeply), in things great and small, in a print, in a plaster-cast, in a hand-organ, in the stars, in the sun to which the sun is hastening, in the flower on my table, in the fly on my paper while I write. [He crosses words, of which he knows nothing; and perhaps we all do as much every moment, over divinest meanings.]

I read everything that is readable, old and new,

particularly fiction, and philosophy, and natural history; am always returning to something Italian, or in Spenser, or in themes of the east; lose no particle of Dickens, of Thackeray, of Mrs. Gaskill (whose *Mary Barton* I have just read, with emotions that required, more and more, the consideration of the good which it must do), call out every week for my *Family Herald*, a little penny publication, qualified to inform the best of its contemporaries; hope the *Leader* will prosper, for a like promise, nay for masterly performance (always supposing it does not speak ill of a great and good minister, whom it is as easy to wish speedier with his reforms, as it is to demand the nullification of mighty weights, when they are not in our own hands); rejoice in republications of wise and witty Mrs. Gore, seeing she makes us wait for something new; wonder when Bulwer will give us more of his potent romances and prospective philosophies; and hail every fresh publication of James, though I know half what he is going to do with his lady, and his gentleman, and his landscape, and his mystery, and his orthodoxy, and his criminal trial. But I am charmed with the new amusement which he brings out of old materials. I look on him as I should look upon a musician, famous for "variations." I am grateful for his vein of cheerfulness, for his singularly varied and vivid landscapes, for his power of painting women at once

lady-like and loving (a rare talent), for his making lovers to match, at once beautiful and well-bred, and for the solace which all this has afforded me, sometimes over and over again, in illness and in convalescence, when I required interest without violence, and entertainment at once animated and mild.

But I could at any time quit these writers, or any other, for men, who, in their own persons, and in a spirit at once the boldest and most loving, dare to face the most trying and awful questions of the time,—the Lamennais and Robert Owens, the Parkers, the Foxtons, and the Newmans,—noble souls, who, in these times, when Christianity is coming into flower, are what the first Christians were when it was only in the root,—brave and good hearts, and self-sacrificing consciences, prepared to carry it as high as it can go, and thinking no earthly consideration paramount to the attainment of its heavenly ends. I may differ with one of them in this or that respect; I may differ with a second in another; but difference with such men, provided we differ in their own spirit, is more harmonious than accord with others; nay, would form a part of the highest music of our sphere, being founded on the very principle of the beautiful, which combines diversity with sameness, and whose "service is perfect freedom." Nobody desires an insipid, languid, and monotonous world, but a world of animated moral beauty, equal to its

physical beauty, and an universal church, embracing many folds.

I admire and love all hearty, and earnest, and sympathizing men, whatever may be their creed,—the admirable Berkeleys and Whichcotes, the Father Matthews and Geddeses, the Mendelsohns, the Lavaters, the Herders, the Williamses and the Priestleys, the Channings, Adam Clarkes, Halls, Carlyles and Emersons, the Hares, Maurices, Whateleys, Foxes, and Vaughans; but, of course, I must admire most those who have given the greatest proofs of self-sacrifice, equal to them as the others may be, and prepared to do the like if their conclusions demanded it.

Alas! how poor it seems, and how painfully against the grain it is, to resume talk about oneself after adverting to people like this. But my book must be finished; and of such talk must autobiographies be made. I assure the reader, that, apart from emotions forced upon me, and unless I am self-deluded indeed, I take no more interest in the subject of my own history, no, nor a twentieth part so much, as I do in that of any other autobiography that comes before me. The present work originated in necessity, was commenced with unwillingness, has taken three years of illness and interruption to write, has repeatedly moved me to ask the publisher to let me change it for another (which out of what he was pleased to consider good for everybody, he would not allow), and I now send

it into the world under the sure and certain conviction that every autobiographer must of necessity be better known to his readers than to himself, let him have written as he may, and that that better knowledge is not likely to lead to his advantage. So be it. The best will judge me kindliest; and I shall be more than content with their conclusions.

Before I terminate, however, I have to notice the latest literary circumstance connected with my name, and to follow up the remarks I have just made with an avowal of such opinions as might have been expected from them. I have no ambition to court danger, for I need not its excitement; neither have I the least desire to offend, for I hate offending, and would willingly disconcert nobody, much less any to whom I am grateful. But there are motives to action which the whole aggregate circumstances of one's life render imperative.

Among the verses with which I solaced myself in the course of these prose writings, were those which from time to time appeared in the *Morning Chronicle*, on occasions connected with the happiness of the Queen, such as the celebration of her Majesty's birthday, the births of the royal children, &c. I have mentioned the train of ideas which circumstances had led me to associate with my thoughts of the Queen; and it was to those associations, joined perhaps to the natural loyalty which every

ungrudging man who is not miserable, is inclined to entertain towards a female sovereign, that are to be attributed all those effusions of gratitude which constituted me for a time a "volunteer laureate," and which are thought by many to have given me a claim to the office.

I am not of their opinion. First, because gratitude makes no claim:—it is acknowledgment of a claim on itself. And, secondly, because the office may require conditions which I am not competent to meet. I do not mean with regard to poetical qualifications; for without entering into comparisons of myself with others, which neither my modesty nor my pride will allow, it would be an affectation and a falsehood in me to pretend, that I do not hold myself to possess them. I venture even to think, and this, too, without any disparagement to court taste, that I should make a better court poet than some who are superior to me in respects not courtly. And sure I am, that in one respect I should make a very rare poet-laureate, as far as the world has hitherto seen; for I should write from the heart. I have done so already. But, on the other hand, courts are places in which the qualifications for office must of necessity be considered with reference to harmonious fitness of many kinds; such as the association of ideas with things courtly, or with others in the memories of the time; with the opinions, real or supposed, of the candidate;

with the light which the candidate himself is honestly bound to afford to the due estimate of those opinions; and with the conclusions which would still in reason remain for the consideration of those who had to judge them, let their honesty be never so well proved. For it is not facts alone, whether right or wrong, that reasonably settle everything in this world for the time being; but the feelings, whether right or wrong, with which these facts are regarded; just as a man could not with propriety expect to be received at court in a garb that is not authorized at the time, whatever may have been the case with it formerly, or may hereafter be the case, or under any other circumstances. And had it been becoming in me to suppose that the laureateship would have been offered me on the death of Mr. Wordsworth (which has taken place but a short time before these words are written), I should have stated at once, in the proper quarters, what I am observing at this moment.

The office of laureate may require that a man should be understood to entertain aristocratical opinions in matters of government, and I do not entertain those opinions. It may require him to entertain the received opinions of orthodoxy in matters of religious faith; and I am not orthodox in my opinions. It may require him, however he may deserve a pension, not to hazard the fancied indecorum of

appearing in a place, where any previous connexion of it, however different from its existing connexions, may have been set by him in a disadvantageous light. And however I might differ with objectors on that point, I cannot gainsay the feelings they might have about it.

I consider myself a royalist of the only right English sort; that is to say, as a republican, with royalty for his safeguard and ornament. I can conceive no condition of society, in which some form of that tranquil, ornamental, and most useful thing called monarchy, will not be the final refuge of political dispute and vicissitude; and this being my opinion, and loving the Queen as I do, I wish with all my heart that her family may govern us in peace and security till the end of time. But though I reverence the past, and can imagine that aristocracies, like all other great facts, may have rendered great and necessary service in its time, and though I would have no change from past to future take place, by any but the softest and most respectful degrees, yet, inasmuch as I am for seeing no paupers in the land, I am for seeing no ultra rich. I love individuals among the aristocracy, and bless and reverence the good they do with their riches; but for their own sakes, as well as for that of the poor, I wish the poor did not give so much trouble to their riches, nor the riches of their less worthy brethren so many

miserable thoughts the poor. I feel just the same with respect to great cotton-spinners, or to any other amassers of treasure, by the side, and by the means, of the half starved. And I do not hold myself at all answered by any reference to the ordinations of Providence; for Providence, by the like reasoning, ordinates dreadful revenges and retributions; and I think that in the instinctive efforts of humanity to advance, and to advance quietly, Providence clearly ordinates, that we are to dispense with any such references in either direction.

These opinions of mine will have been seen fully expressed in many a previous publication, nor have they been intimated even courtwards for the first time. They are implied in the following passage from the lines on the birthday of the Princess Alice:—

> "What a world, were human-kind
> All of one instructed mind!
> What a world to rule, to please;—
> To share 'twixt enterprise and ease!
> *Graceful manners flowing round*
> *From the earth's enchanted ground;*
> Comfort keeping all secure,—
> *None too rich, and none too poor.*"

I never addressed any congratulation to the Queen, without implying something in this spirit; something in behalf of progress and the poor. I thought I could not pay her a greater compliment, or (as

far as lay in my power) do her a more loyal and loving service.

"And this glad mother and great queen
Weeping for the poor was seen,—
And vowing, in her princely will,
That they should thrive and bless her still."
Lines on the Birth of the Prince of Wales.

"Growing harvests of all good,
Day by day, as planet should,—
Till it clap its hands, and cry
Hail, matur'd humanity!
Earth has outgrown *want* and *war*:
Earth is now no childish star.
Lines on the Birth of the Princess Royal.

"Blest be the Queen! Blest when the sun goes down;
When rises, blest. May love line soft her crown.
May music's self not more harmonious be
Than the mild manhood by her side and she.
May she be young for ever,—ride, dance, sing,—
'Twixt cares of state, carelessly carolling;
And set all fashions healthy, blithe, and wise,
From whence good mothers and glad offspring rise.
May everybody love her. May she be
As brave as will, yet soft as charity;
And on her coins be never laurel seen,
But only those fair peaceful locks serene,
Beneath whose waving grace first mingle now
The ripe Guelph cheek, and good straight Coburg brow,
Pleasure and reason! *May she every day*
See some new good winning its gentle way
By means of mild and unforbidden men!
And when the sword hath bow'd beneath the pen,
May her own line a patriarch scene unfold,
As far surpassing what these days behold,
E'en in the thunderous gods, iron and steam,
As they the sceptic's doubt, or wild man's dream!

(The benediction here passes from the political to the religious future.)

> And to this end,—oh! to this Christian end,
> And the sure coming of its next great friend,
> May her own soul, this instant, while I sing,
> Be smiling, as beneath some angel's wing,
> O'er the dear life in life,—the small, sweet, new
> Unselfish self,—the filial self of two;
> Bliss of her future eyes, her pillow'd gaze,
> On whom a mother's heart thinks close, and prays."
>
> *Lines on Her Majesty's Birth-Day.*

This passage (for in my belief of the Queen's truly elevated and loving spirit I never hesitated to associate the idea of her royalty with that of the wife and the mother) was written in contemplation of the then approaching birth of an heir to the throne. I meant to express a hope that the next reigning sovereign would see a great advance in Christianity itself, and be its friend accordingly. But I did not state what I expected that advance to be. I now feel it my duty to be explicit on the subject; and the reader will see at once how "unorthodox" is my version of Christianity, when I declare that I do not believe one single dogma, which the reason that God has put in our heads, or the heart that he has put in our bosoms, revolts at. For though reason cannot settle many undeniable mysteries that perplex us, and though the heart must acknowledge the existence of others from which it cannot but receive pain, yet that

is no reason why mysteries should be palmed upon reason of which it sees no evidence whatever, or why pain should be forced upon the heart, for which it sees grounds as little. On the contrary, the more mysteries there are with which I cannot help being perplexed, the less will I gratuitously admit for the purpose of perplexing myself further; and the greater the number of the pains that are forced upon my heart, the fewer will I be absurd enough to invite out of the regions of the unproveable, to afflict me in addition. What evils there are, I find, for the most part, relieved with many consolations: some I find to be necessary to the requisite amount of good: and every one of them I find to come to a termination; for either they are cured and live, or are killed and die; and in the latter case I see no evidence to prove that a little finger of them aches any more. This palpable revelation, then, of God, which is called the universe, contains no evidence whatsoever of the thing called eternal punishment; and why should I admit any assertion of it that is not at all palpable? If an angel were to tell me to believe in eternal punishment, I would not do it, for it would better become me to believe the angel a delusion than God monstrous; and we make him monstrous when we make him the author of eternal punishment, though we have not the courage to think so. For God's sake, let us have piety enough to believe him better. I speak thus

boldly, not to shock [illegible], which it would distress me to think I did, but because opinions so shocking distress myself, and because they ought, I think, to distress everybody else, and so be put an end to. Of any readers whom I may shock, I beg their forgiveness. Only I would entreat them to reflect how far that creed can be in the right, which renders it shocking in God's children to think the best of their Father.

I respect all churches which are practically good. I respect the Church of England in particular, for its moderate exercise of power, and because I think it has been a blessed medium of transition from superstition to a right faith. Yet inasmuch as I am of opinion that the "letter killeth and the spirit giveth life," I am looking to see the letter itself killed, and the spirit giving life, for the first time, to a religion, which need revolt and shock nobody.

If opinions like these are incompatible with any court office, I am incompetent to hold that office. If the avowal itself be incompatible, still I think it becomes me to make it, even because it proves me incompetent. If the opinions have nothing to do with the office, I should rejoice to be thought worthy of it; for, though I must own, that fault may be found with its title, and that the office itself, as hitherto discharged, might well be changed for some other, yet I think, that poetry, in some shape of

court service, at once loyal and free, might be rendered no unworthy or useless addition to the links of attachment between prince and people.

But it becomes me, before I close this book, to make a greater avowal; for I think it may assist, in however small a degree, towards smoothing the advent of a great and inevitable change.

It seems clear to me, from all which is occurring in Europe at this moment, from the signs in the papal church, in our own church, in the universal talk and minds of men, whether for it or against it, that the knell of the letter of Christianity itself has struck, and that it is time for us to inaugurate and enthrone the spirit. I was in hopes, when Pius the Ninth first made his appearance in Europe, that a great as well as good man had arisen, competent to so noble a task. Young Italy, let loose from prison, fell at his feet; and I think, that had he persevered in what made it do so, all Europe would have fallen at his feet, and the papal power have thus profited by its greatest and only remaining chance of retaining the sceptre of the Christian world. But the new Pope was frightened at being thought one of the "New Christians" (as Lamartine called them); he hastened to issue a bull declaring the unalterableness of every papal dogma; and the moment he did that, he signed the death-warrant of his church. Dogma, whatever may be the convulsive appearances to the

contrary in certain feeble quarters, has ceased to be a vital European principle; and nothing again will ever be universally taken for Christianity, but the religion of Love to God and Man:—Love to God, as the Divine Mind which brings good and beauty out of blind-working matter; and Love to Man, as God's instrument for advancing the world we live in, and as partaker with his fellow-men of suffering, and endeavour, and enjoyment. "Reason," says Milton, "is choice;" and where is to be found a religion better to choose than this? Immortality is a hope for all, which it is not just to make a blessing for any less number, or a misery for a single soul. Faith depends for its credibility on its worthiness; and without "works" is "dead." But charity, by which lovely Greek word is not to be understood any single form of moral grace and kindness, but every possible form of it conducive to love on earth, and its link with heaven, is the only *sine quâ non* of all final opinions of God and man.

"Behold I give unto you a new commandment, —Love one another." "In this ye fulfil the law and the prophets." "By their fruits ye shall know them." "God is Love."

Such, and such only, are the texts upon which sermons will be preached, to the exclusion of whatsoever is infernal and unintelligible. No hell. No unfatherliness. No monstrous exactions of assent to

the incredible. No impious Athanasian Creed. No creed of any kind but such as proves its divineness by the wish of all good hearts to believe it if they might, and by the encouragement that would be given them to believe it, in the acclamations of the earth. The world has outgrown the terrors of its childhood, and no spurious mistake of a saturnine spleen for a masculine necessity will induce a return to them. Mankind have become too intelligent; too brave; too impatient of being cheated, and threatened, and "put off;" too hungry and thirsty for a better state of things in the beautiful planet in which they live, and the beauty of which has been an unceasing exhortation and preface to the result. By that divine doctrine will all men gradually come to know in how many quarters the Divine Spirit has appeared among them, and what sufficing lessons for their guidance they have possessed in almost every creed, when the true portions of it shall hail one another from nation to nation, and the mixture of error through which it worked has become unnecessary. For God is not honoured by supposing him a niggard of his bounty. Jesus himself was not divine because he was Jesus, but because he had a divine and loving heart; and wherever such greatness has appeared, there has divineness appeared also, as surely as the same sunshine of heaven is on the mountain tops of east and west.

Such are the doctrines, and such only, accompanied by expositions of the beauties and wonders of God's great book of the universe, which will be preached in the temples of the earth, including those of our beloved country, England, its beautiful old ivied turrets and their green neighbourhoods, then, for the first time, thoroughly uncontradicted and heavenly; with not a sound in them more terrible than the stormy yet sweet organ, analogous to the beneficent winds and tempests; and no thought of here or hereafter, that can disturb the quiet aspect of the graves, or the welcome of the new-born darling.

And that such a consummation may come slowly but surely, without intermission in its advance, and with not an injury to a living soul, will be the last prayer, as it must needs be among the latest words, of the author of this book.

APPENDIX.

LETTERS OF THOMAS MOORE, AND SHELLEY, TO LEIGH HUNT.

LETTERS OF THOMAS MOORE.

(The Italics in all the following letters are the writers' own.)

LETTER I.

[*On receiving a letter and some books.*]

[1811.]

My dear Sir,—I am just about to step into the mail for a week's absence from town, and have only time to say that I have received your letter, which I have read with gratitude and admiration.—How you, who write so much in public, can *afford* to write so well in private, is miraculous—I shall take your book with me, and hope to tell you all I think and feel about them, at Beckenham.*

Bury-street, Monday evening.

* Where I then lived.

LETTER II.

[*Opera of* M.P., or the Blue Stocking.—Poem of Atys, from Catullus.]

[Post-mark, 1811.]

MY DEAR SIR,—It was my intention, upon receiving the last letter with which you favoured me, to answer it by a visit, and that immediately; but I was hurried off to the country by the sickness of a friend; and since my return, I have been occupied in a way that makes me very unfit society for *you*—namely, in writing bad jokes for the galleries of the Lyceum. To make the galleries laugh, is in itself sufficiently degrading; but to *try* to make them laugh and *fail* (which I fear will be my destiny) is deplorable indeed. The secret of it, however, is, that, upon my last return from Ireland, in one of those moments of weakness to which poets and their purses are too liable, I agreed to give Arnold a piece for the summer; and you may perceive, by the lateness of my appearance, with what reluctance I have performed my engagement.

It will no doubt occur to you, upon reading the first page of this note, that the whole purport of it is *to ask for mercy;* but the kind terms in which you have spoken of some things I have written, make me too much interested in your *sincerity* to ask for, or *wish*, the slightest breach of it. I have no doubt that, in this instance, you will treat me with severity; and I am just as sure that, if you do, I shall have deserved it. Only say that you *expected something better* from me, and I shall be satisfied.

I must (though late) thank you for your last *Reflector*—the poem to which you were good enough to direct my attention, interested me extremely; there is nothing so delightful as those alternate sinkings and risings, both of feeling and style, which

you have exhibited in those verses, and you cannot think how gracefully it becomes the high philosophy of your mind to saunter now and then among the flowers of poetry. Do indulge her with a few more walks, I beseech you.

I am afraid you look upon me as a bad politician, or you would likewise have bid me read the fine article, entitled (if I recollect right) "A Retrospect of Public Affairs."—It is most ably done—but you write too well for a politician—and it is really a pity to go to the expense of *fulminating gold*, when common *gunpowder* serves the purpose just as well.

I shall not call upon you now till I have passed the ordeal—but till then, and ever, believe me, my dear Sir,

Yours, with much esteem,

THOMAS MOORE.

Bury-street, Saturday.

The fragment which Carpenter told you I had for the *Reflector* was *wickedly* political. Some of the allusions have now lost their hold; but you shall see it, and perhaps something may, with your assistance, be yet made of it.

LETTER III.

[*On* "M.P., or the Blue Stocking."]

MY DEAR SIR,—I have not the least fear that *you* will make any ungenerous use of the anxiety which I express with respect to your good opinion of me. I dare say you have read in the *Times* of yesterday the very well-written, and (I confess) but too just account which they give of the *shooting* of my *fool's-bolt* on Monday. The only misrepresentation I can accuse them of (and *that* I feel very sensibly) is the charge of Royalism

and courtiership, which they have founded upon my foolish clap-trap with respect to the Regent;—this has astonished me the more, as the Opera underwent a very severe cutting from the Licenser for a very opposite quality to courtiership; and it is merely lest *you* should be led into a mistake (from the little consideration you can afford to give to such nonsense) that I trouble you with this note.

If the child's plea, "I'll never do so again," could soften criticism, I may be depended upon, from this moment, for a most hearty abjuration of the stage, and all its heresies of pun, equivoque, and clap-trap. However humble I may be in other departments of literature, I am quite conscious of being contemptible in this.

Yours, my dear Sir, very truly,

THOMAS MOORE.

27, Bury-street, Wednesday.

Did you receive a note I sent you about a week ago?

LETTER IV.

[*On the* Feast of the Poets. — *Lord Moira.*—*Verses in the "Morning Chronicle."*]

[Post-mark, August 1812.]

MY DEAR SIR,—I am very sorry to find, by your *Examiner* of last Sunday, that you are ill, and I sincerely hope, both for the sake of yourself and the world, that it is not an indisposition of any serious nature. I have very often, since I left town, had thoughts of writing to you; not that I had anything to say, but merely to keep myself alive in your recollection, till some lucky jostle in our life's journey throws us closer together than we

have hitherto been. It is *not* true, however, that I have had nothing to say to you, for I have to thank you for your poem in the *Reflector*, which I would praise for its beauty, if my praises could be thought *disinterested* enough to please you; but it has won my heart rather too much to leave my judgment fair play; and the pleasure of being praised by *you* makes me incapable of returning the compliment. All that I can tell you is, that your good opinion of me, in general, is paid back with interest tenfold, and that my thoughts about you are so well known to those I live with, that I have the pleasure of finding you acknowledged among them by no other title than "Moore's Friend." I suppose you have heard that I suddenly burst upon my acquaintances last spring, in the new characters of husband and father; and I hope you will believe me when I say that (though my little intercourse with you might have made such a confidence impertinent on my side), I often wished to make you one of the very few friends who knew the secret of my happiness, and witnessed my enjoyment of it. I rather think, too, that if you were acquainted with the story of my marriage, it would not tend to *lower* me from that place, which, I am proud to believe, I hold in your esteem. I have got a small house and large garden here in the neighbourhood of Lord Moira's fine library, and feel happy in the consciousness that I have *indeed* "mended my notions of pleasure," and that I am likely, after all, to be what men like you approve. Mrs. Moore and I have been for these ten days past on a visit to our noble neighbour, who is at length preparing for an old age of *independence*, by a manly and summary system of retrenchment. He has dismissed nearly all his servants, and is retiring to a small house in Sussex, leaving his park and fine library here to *solitude and me*. How I have mourned over his late negotiation! A sword looks crooked in water, and the weak medium of Carlton House

has given an appearance of obliquity even to Lord Moira; but both the sword and he may be depended on still—at least I think so.

I was very much flattered by your taking some doggrel of mine out of the *Morning Chronicle* some months since, called *The Insurrection of the Papers*. I don't know whether you saw *The Plumassier* about the same time. It was mine also, but not so good. I hope next year, when I have got over a work I am about, to help you with a few shafts of ridicule in the noble warfare you are engaged in, since I find that you have thought some of them not unworthy your notice.

With best regards to Mrs. Hunt and your *little child*, for whom I could supply a *companion picture*, I am, my dear sir,

Most truly yours,

THOMAS MOORE.

Wednesday.

I shall take the liberty of paying the postage of this, lest it might not be received at the office.

LETTER V.

[*On Mr. Leigh Hunt's Imprisonment—Lord Moira, &c.*]

Kegworth, Leicestershire, Thursday.

MY DEAR SIR,—I was well aware that, on the first novelty of your imprisonment, you would be overwhelmed with all sorts of congratulations and condolences, and therefore resolved to reserve *my* tribute, both of approbation and sympathy, till the gloss of your chains was a little gone off, and both friends and *starers* had got somewhat accustomed to them. If I were now to tell you half of what I have thought and felt in your favour

during this period, I fear it would be more than you know enough of me to give me credit for; and I shall, therefore, only say in true Irish phrase and spirit, that my *heart* takes you by the hand most cordially, and that I only wish that heaven had given me a brother whom I could think so well of, and feel so warmly about. I hope to be in London, in about four or five weeks, when one of my first visits shall be to Horsemonger-lane; and I trust I shall find your restrictions so far relaxed, as to allow of my not merely *looking at you* through the bars, but passing an hour or two with you in your room.

I have long observed, and (I must confess) wondered at your *retenue* about Lord Moira, and have sometimes flattered myself (forgive me for being so vain, and so little just, perhaps, to your sense of duty) that a little regard for *me* was at the bottom of your forbearance, for you have always struck me as one whom nature never destined "accusatoriam vitam vivere," and who, if you were to live much among us Lilliputians of this world, would soon find your giant limbs entangled with a multitude of almost invisible *heart*-strings; but be this as it may, I must acknowledge (with a candour which is *wrung* from me) that Lord Moira's conduct no longer deserves your approbation; and when I say this, I trust I need not add, that it *no longer has mine*. His kindnesses to me, of course, I can never forget; but they are remembered as one remembers the kindnesses of a faithless mistress; and that esteem, that reverence, which was the soul of all, is fled. His thoughtfulness about me, indeed, remained to the last; and in the interview which I had with him immediately on his coming down here after his appointment, he said that, though he had nothing sufficiently good in his *Indian* patronage to warrant my taking such an expensive voyage, yet it was in his power, by *exchange* of patronage with ministers, to serve me at home, and that he meant

to provide for me in this way; to which I answered, with many acknowledgments for his friendship, that "I begged he would not take the trouble of making any such application; as I would infinitely rather struggle on as I am, than accept of anything under such a system." I must add (because it is creditable to him) that this refusal, though so significantly conveyed, and still more strongly afterwards by letter, did not offend him, and that he continued the most cordial attentions to us during the remainder of his stay. I know you will forgive this egotism, and would, perhaps, trouble you with a little more of it, if the unrelenting post time were not very nearly at hand.

My Bessy has given me another little girl, which was one of the very few wrong things she does, for I meant it to be a boy. If the lively anxiety and interest of a very pure and natural heart be gratifying to you, you have had it from her throughout. Do you recollect meeting me and her one day?* Best regards to Mrs. Hunt, from

Yours, ever,

THOMAS MOORE.

LETTER VI.

[*Villages of Kegworth and Ashbourne—Song by Lovelace—Cockney rhymes—Gretry's notion of the clarionet.*]

Mayfield Cottage, Ashbourne, Derbyshire.

MY DEAR HUNT,—I take advantage of an envelope to send you greeting from my new habitation, where I am sure you will be glad to hear I am much more *poetically* situated than I

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* I recollected it well, and the lady's unaffected and graceful demeanour.

was at Kegworth, which, to say no worse of it, is a very unlovely village, and where (as the Kegworthies chiefly consist of manufacturers and methodists) I heard nothing but hymns and stocking-frames all day long: *here*, however, I have no such *muse-less* people near me, but have got into a solitary little cottage in the fields, where the only thing like a habitation I see from my windows, is an old romantic church half a mile off among the trees;—really, without affectation, I think I begin to feel that the "genius loci" has no inconsiderable influence on my mind; and that I am writing all the better for the select company of trees, cows, and birds I have got into. I have started afresh with my poem (as the sailors term it)—"taken a new departure;" and I like myself much better this time of setting out than I did before. How are *you* getting on? singing away, I hope, "like *committed linnets*"—(by-the-by, what a good parable you might draw between the feelings described in this pretty prison poem of Lovelace's,* and your own, about the "sweetness, mercy, majesty," &c.) I wish very much you would copy out for me what you have done of your poem† since I left town, and I wish this, more from my anxiety about your success, than from any idea that my criticism could be of use to you; but I will tell you honestly all I think and feel about it, and there is *just a chance* that my remarks may be of some service, though my chief motive for asking it is to gratify *myself*. I think what I am most likely to differ with you about, is the use of some unusual words in which you appear inclined to indulge, and some of which struck me as ungraceful. Above all things, too, I deprecate such rhymes as

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* The celebrated song beginning "When love with unconfined wings." It had been quoted in the *Examiner*.

† *The Story of Rimini.*

that you have made to *aha!*—the gratuitous *h* of the cockneys after words ending in *a* is inadmissible, I think, even in *doggrel* rhymes, though poor Harry Greville, (the Pic Nic Colonel) thought the following rhymes verses, not only * * * language—*

"This heart is glowing with desire
For thee, my lovely, sweet Maria!"

Mind, whenever I presume to speak to you *ex cathedrâ* of poetry, you must be generous enough not to throw his *practice* in the face of the preacher, but listen to me as gravely as you would to a sermon of the Rev. H. B. Dudley's against adultery, or a charge from Lord Ellenborough about indecorous expressions—or if you *will* institute odious comparisons, in my present self-satisfied state (for "omnia nostra, dum nascuntur, *placent*"), I would say "compare with my *present* practice, not with my *past*."

If you consent to send me your verses as you write, and feel any compunction about my paying postage for them, you may send your packet under cover to the Marchioness Dowager of Donegal, 56, Davies Street, Berkeley Square, and she will get it franked to me.

In the hope of soon hearing from you and your muse, I am, my dear Hunt,

(*Signature cut out.*)

Thursday evening.

I have just been reading a very amusing work of Gretry upon music, and he says, speaking of a *tristezza* he imagines there is in the sound of a *clarionet*, that if a man in prison should *dance*, it ought to be to the clarionet—so, you know your instrument, whenever you feel inclined to this exercise——

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* Some words have been lost here, owing to the cutting out of the signature on the opposite side of the page.

LETTER VII.

[*Jeux d'esprit in the* Chronicle.]

Mayfield Cottage, Monday evening.
[Post-mark, August 1813.]

My dear Hunt,—Since I wrote to you, I received the *Examiner*, in which you impute two things from the *Chronicle* to my friend Mr. Brown (himself). For *once* you are wrong. The "little man and little soul" *is* his, but the other is *not*. It is not worth making a paragraph about; but if you can find an opportunity of setting your *squib-readers* right upon this important matter, I should be glad you would; and you may cite Mr. Brown's authority, both for the avowal and disavowal. This ballad about Abbot is the only flight of nonsense I have taken since I left town.

I hope you see my friend Lord Byron often; one of the very few London pleasures I envy him is the visit to Horsemonger-lane now and then.

Faithfully yours,
Thomas Moore.

LETTER VIII.

[*Excuse for an unpaid visit*—Lalla Rookh.]

Sunday night.

My dear Hunt,—It is with very sincere regret that I find myself compelled to leave town this time without seeing you. I have been but a week here—in a whirl of business—and had set apart Thursday last for a visit to you with Lord Byron, who expressed strong, and I am sure *sincere*, eagerness upon the

subject; but he failed me, and I have not had another moment since. Disappointed as I am myself, however, I have the happiness of thinking that *you* are become more independent of the attentions and visits of your friends, from the spirits which the near approach of liberty must give you. That you may long enjoy that liberty in health and happiness, and, at all events, never lose it in a worse cause than that you now suffer for, is the very warm wish of your friend,

THOMAS MOORE.

I have just concluded with the Longmans for my poem—three thousand pounds! but I do not come at (them) till this time twelvemonth.

LETTER IX.

[*Expressions of friendship*—Lalla Rookh.]

Mayfield Cottage, Monday morning.

MY DEAR HUNT,—I have had an unquiet conscience ever since I sent off my last letter to you—because in my flippant tirade against critics, I was led into a forgetfulness of two or three kind things you have said, which are of more value to me than a whole legion of Aristotles. In the first place, though you bid me not think any more of the little glimpse of future glorification you have opened upon me, you could not seriously expect that I should obey you—you may be very sure I shall treasure up the promise most proudly, and if you depend upon my bad memory for an escape from it, you have but a very poor chance indeed. Next to my pleasure in *being* your friend, is the pride I should feel in letting the world *know* that I am so.

* * * * * *

I intended to have told you something about my poem,* which, though often pulled down and rebuilt again, is now in a fair way of progress; but I have not left myself room in this sheet, and it is not worth beginning another; so good-bye.

Ever yours,

T. MOORE.

LETTER X.

[*On the* Story of Rimini.]

Mayfield Cottage, March 7th, 1814.

MY DEAR HUNT,—I do forgive you for your long silence, though you have much less right to be careless about our non-intercourse than I have—if I knew as little about you and your existence as you know of me, I should not feel quite so patient under the privation—but I have the advantage of communing with you, for a very delightful hour, every Tuesday evening: of knowing your thoughts upon all that passes, and of exclaiming "right!—bravo!—exactly!" to every sentiment you express; whereas, from the very few signs of life I give in the world, you can only take my existence for granted, as we do that of the

"Little woman under the hill,
Who, if she 's not gone, must live there still."

However, I *do* forgive you, and only wish I could pay you back a millesimal part of the pleasure which—in various ways—as poet, as politician, as partial friend, you have lately given me. Your *Rimini* is beautiful, and its only faults such as you are

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* *Lalla Rookh.*

aware of, and prepared to justify. There is that maiden charm of originality about it—that "*integer, illibatusque succus*," which Columella tells us the bees extract—that freshness of the living fount, which we look in vain for in the bottled-up Heliconian of ordinary bards: in short, it is poetry; and notwithstanding the quaintnesses, the coinages, and even affectations, with which, *here* and *there*——

I had just got so far, my dear Hunt, when I was interrupted by a prosing neighbour, who has put everything I meant to say out of my head: so, there I must leave you, impaled on the point of this broken sentence, and wishing you as little torture there as the nature of the case will allow. I have only time to say again, that your poem is beautiful, and that, if I do not exactly agree with some of your notions about versification and language, the general spirit of the work has more than satisfied my utmost expectations of you. If you go on thus, you will soon make some of Apollo's guests "sit below the salt." The additions to this latter poem* are excellent, and the lines on music at the end are full of beauty.†

There are many of the lines of *Rimini* that "haunt me like a passion." I don't know whether I ought to own, that these are among the number. I quote from memory:—

> "The woe was short, was fugitive, is past!
> The song that sweetens it, may always last."

I am afraid you will set this down among your regular, sing-song couplets—to me it is all music.

Is it true that your friend Lord B. has taken to the beautifully "mammosa" Mrs. ——? Who, after this, will call him

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* *The Feast of the Poets.*

† Some lines entitled *Thoughts on Music*, appended to a new edition of *The Feast of the Poets.*

a "searcher of dark bosoms?" Not a word to him, however, about this last question of mine.

Ever, my dear Hunt, most faithfully yours,

THOMAS MOORE.

I hope to deliver my mighty work into Longman's hands in May; but, of course, it will not go to press till after the summer.*

LETTER XI.

[*Regrets at not meeting.*]

11, Duke-street, St. James's, Tuesday.

MY DEAR HUNT,—Here I have been for five or six days past, and we have not met. When, where, or how is it to (be) achieved? *I* was better off when you were in prison. Pray, let me have a line to say whether you will come to town, on what days, what hours, &c. &c., and believe me,

Ever, yours truly,

THOMAS MOORE.

LETTER XII.

[*Masque on the* Descent of Liberty—Champion *weekly newspaper, and its editor, Mr. John Scott—Bonaparte on his road from Elba to Paris—Articles by Mr. Moore in the* Edinburgh Review—*Question relative to mothers.*]

Mayfield Cottage, Thursday, March 30th, 1816.

MY DEAR HUNT,—Many thanks for the Mask†—you already know my opinion of it—it will live in spite of the Congress and Bonaparte; and though the principal maskers have shifted dresses a good deal since, your poetry is independent of the

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* *Lalla Rookh.*

† *The Descent of Liberty.*

politics. It has that kind of general and fanciful character of Sir Joshua Reynolds's portraits, which will make it long outlive the frail and foolish heads that sat for it. I see you have been done justice to by a very interesting writer in the *Champion*. His description of you in the prison-garden is done well and feelingly. I was a good deal surprised, during a visit some time ago to Chatsworth, to find how very little more than the *reputation* of the *Champion* had reached any of the various Whig lords there assembled. They had all *heard* it was extremely clever; but I do not think one of them had ever met with it, which I could not help considering a little stupid in their lordships. Your friend, Scott, is a fine fellow, and I heartily hope he may have perfect success. I see your imagination was affected, as mine was, by the description of Bonaparte's meeting with the Royal army.* If that account be true, it is a fact as sublime as anything that fiction ever thought of; and I am not at all surprised at the overwhelming effects of such daring—such apparent consciousness of irresponsibility. For my own part, I should have thought that *Fate herself* was coming in that carriage. I perfectly agree with *you* on the subject of his restoration—or rather, I go beyond you—for I am decidedly *glad* of it; but, then, *I* am an Irishman—feræ naturæ—beyond the pale; and my opinions, I believe, are more the result of passion than of reason. If, however, there is a single Norwegian, Genoese, Saxon, or Pole, that doesn't agree with me, why—he is a very worthy, loyal sort of gentleman, and I wish his masters joy of him—that's all.

I supposed you recognised me (by my old pickled and preserved joke about Southey) in the *Edinburgh* article on Lord Thurlow; but I doubt whether I was equally well known to

* On his return from Elba.

you as the orthodox critic of the Fathers in the last number. Scott, I saw, gave an extract from me, which was the only sign of life this last article has exhibited since its appearance.

Mrs. Moore is much gratified by your remembrance of her. I have had some difficulty in bringing her to bear her late loss with resignation, and I fear her health is paying for the efforts her mind has made. If I had let her grieve more at first, I am sure she would have been better now. Which hurts women most—*having* children or *losing* them? I sincerely hope Mrs. Hunt may always be unable to answer as to the latter part of this question; and with best remembrances to her, I am, my dear Hunt, very truly yours,

THOMAS MOORE.

Lord Byron is just gone to town. He has got, he tells me, the Duchess of Devonshire's house in Piccadilly.

LETTER XIII.

[*Overflow of ideas—Moral prejudices.*]

Sloperton Cottage, Devizes, January 21st, 1818.

MY DEAR HUNT,—Having the opportunity of a frank, I must write you a line or two to thank you for your very kind notices of me; and still more, to express my regret that in my short and busy visit to town, I had not the happiness, to which I looked forward, of passing at least one day with you and your family. I am always so thrown "*in medias res*" when I go to London, that I have never a minute left for anything agreeable; but my next visit will, I hope, be one of pleasure, and then you are *sure* to be brought in among the ingredients. For the cordiality with which you have praised and defended me, I am, I assure you, most deeply grateful; and, though less alive, I am sorry to say, both to praise and blame, than I used to be

yet coming from a heart and a taste like yours, they cannot fail to touch me very sensibly. You are quite right about the conceits that disfigure my poetry; but you (and others) are quite as wrong in supposing that I *hunt* after them—my greatest difficulty is to *hunt them* away. If you had ever been in the habit of hearing Curran converse—though I by no means intend to compare myself with him in the ready coin of wit—yet, from the tricks which his imagination played him while he talked, you might have some idea of the phantasmagoria that mine passes before me while I write. In short, St. Anthony's temptations were nothing to what an Irish fancy has to undergo from all its own brood of Will-o'-th'-wisps and hobgoblins.

I was sorry to find that Cobbett found such a sturdy defender in your correspondent of last week; indeed, I am grieved to the heart at many things I see among the friends of liberty, and begin to fear much more harm from the advocates of the cause than from its enemies. You, however, are always right in *politics;* and if you would but keep your theories of religion and morality a little more to yourself (the Mania on these subjects being so universal and *congenital*, that he who thinks of curing it is as mad as his Patients), you would gain influence over many minds that you unnecessarily shock and alienate. I would not say this of you in public (for I cannot review my friends) but I say it to you thus privately, with all the anxious sincerity of a well-wisher both to yourself and the cause you so spiritedly advocate. I intended to have written you a long letter, but the post-*belle* (an old woman whom I employ for that purpose) is ringing her alarum below, and I must finish. My best regards to Mrs. Hunt.

Yours, very faithfully,

THOMAS MOORE.

LETTER XIV.

[*Irish Melodies—Expressions of friendship—Loss by the defalcation of a deputy of Bermuda.*]

Sloperton Cottage, Devizes, Oct. 10th, 1818.

My dear Hunt,—I intended that a letter from me should accompany your copy of the 7th number of my Melodies; but I rather think, from your paper of Sunday last, that Power has had the start of me; and I only write now to get a little credit from you for my *intentions*, which, in general, indeed, are the best things about me, but which, unfortunately, the matter-of-fact people of the world are never satisfied with. As you have imagination, however, as well as heart, I shall leave you to fancy all the kind things I have felt towards you, during the long, long time I have passed in saying nothing whatever about them; and I am the more inclined just now to trust a good deal to your imaginative power, as I am disabled from writing much from a slight strain in my shoulder, which I received the night before last—when the world was near being a bad poet out of pocket by the upsetting of a carriage in which I was returning from Bowood.

Shall you be in London about the latter end of November? I hope to be there about that time, and we *must* meet; for I have much to say to you, much to give and receive sympathy about. I suppose you have heard of the calamity that has befallen me through the defalcation of my deputy at Bermuda, who has made free with the proceeds of two or three ships and cargoes deposited in his hands, and I am likely to be made responsible for the amount. You will, it is most probable, have an opportunity of returning my *prison visits*; as, if it comes to the worst, the Rules must be my residence. How-

ever (as I have just written to Lord Byron), *Unity* of *Place* is one of Aristotle's *Rules*, and, as a poet, I must learn to conform to it. By-the-by, he has made many inquiries about you in his two last letters to me, and I should be glad to hear from you before I write to him again. I hope you will like my *Irish Melodies* better than you liked *Lalla Rookh*.

You were right about the verses to Sir H. Lowe.

Yours, my dear Hunt, very truly,

THOMAS MOORE.

LETTER XV.

[*Compliment to the* Examiner—*Dr. Bowring.*]

Paris, Aug. 20th, 1821.

MY DEAR HUNT,—I take the opportunity of a frank to send you a hasty line of acknowledgment for your kind mention of me. I was indeed most happy to see the announcement of your recovery, for public as well as private reasons; for, though you have right good auxiliaries, there is but one Richmond in the field after all.

This is a very delightful place to live in; and if I was not *obliged* to stay in it, I should feel the time pass happily enough; for were

> "E'en Paradise itself my prison,
> Still I should long to leap the crystal walls."

Your friend Mr. Bowring and I were rather unlucky in our attempts to meet, but we *did* meet at last, and I liked him exceedingly.

(*Signature cut off.*)

LETTERS OF SHELLEY.

[I regret extremely, on the reader's account, as well as my own, that I have not taken better and more grateful care of the letters which my friend wrote to me. I cannot conceive how so many have been missing. Some were, doubtless, given away; others may have been handed about, and detained. Such as I can lay before the public, I do.]

LETTER I.

[*Remonstrance for not being waked at parting—Lyons Weather in March—Poem of the* Nymphs.

Lyons, March 22nd, 1818.

My Dear Friend,—Why did you not wake me that night before we left England, you and Marianne? I take this as rather an unkind piece of kindness in you; but which, in consideration of the six hundred miles between us, I forgive.*

We have journeyed towards the spring that has been hastening to meet us from the south; and though our weather was at first abominable, we have now warm sunny days, and soft winds, and a sky of deep azure, the most serene I ever saw.

* My wife and myself had taken leave of him in the negative manner alluded to, in his lodgings in Great Russell-street. I wish I could tell the number of the house, for the sake of my brother lovers of localities; but it was some doors up on the left side of the way from Tottenham-court-road—perhaps as many as twenty—and the name of the person of whom he rented the lodgings, was that of a distinguished connection of his own—Godwin.

The heat in this city to-day, is like that of London in the midst of summer. My spirits and health sympathize in the change. Indeed, before I left London, my spirits were as feeble as my health, and I had demands upon them which I found it difficult to supply. I have read *Foliage*:—with most of the poems I was already familiar. What a delightful poem the *Nymphs* is! especially the second part. It is truly *poetical*, in the intense and emphatic sense of the word. If six hundred miles were not between us, I should say what pity that *glib* was not omitted, and that the poem is not as faultless as it is beautiful. But for fear I should *spoil* your next poem, I will not let slip a word on the subject. Give my love to Marianne and her sister, and tell Marianne she defrauded me of a kiss by not waking me when she went away, and that as I have no better mode of conveying it, I must take the best, and ask you to pay the debt. When shall I see you all again? Oh that it might be in Italy! I confess that the thought of how long we may be divided, makes me very melancholy. Adieu, my dear friends. Write soon. Ever most affectionately yours,

P. B. S.

LETTER II.

[Prometheus Unbound—*The* Masque of Anarchy—Julian and Maddalo—*Familiar, vulgar, and ideal styles of writing*—Rosalind and Helen.]

Livorno, August 15th, 1819.

My dear Friend,—How good of you to write to us so often, and such kind letters! But it is like lending to a beggar. What can I offer in return?*

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* Such is the way in which the most generous of men used to talk to those whom he had obliged.

Though surrounded by suffering and disquietude, and latterly almost overcome by our strange misfortune,* I have not been idle. My *Prometheus* is finished, and I am also on the eve of completing another work, totally different from anything you might conjecture that I should write; of a more popular kind; and, if anything of mine could deserve attention, of higher claims.† "Be innocent of the knowledge, dearest chuck, till thou approve the performance."

I send you a little poem to give to Ollier for publication, but *without my name:* Peacock will correct the proofs. I wrote it with the idea of offering it to the *Examiner*, but I find it is too long.‡ It was composed last year at Este: two of the characters you will recognize; the third is also in some degree a painting from nature, but, with respect to time and place, ideal. You will find the little piece, I think, in some degree consistent with your own ideas of the manner in which poetry ought to be written. I have employed a certain familiar style of language to express the actual way in which people talk with each other, whom education and a certain refinement of sentiment have placed above the use of vulgar idioms. I use the word *vulgar* in its most extensive sense: the vulgarity of rank and fashion is as gross, in its way, as that of poverty, and its cant terms equally expressive of base conceptions, and therefore equally unfit for poetry. Not that the familiar style is to be admitted in the treatment of a subject wholly ideal, or in that part of any subject which relates to common life, where the passion, exceeding a certain limit, touches the boundaries of that which

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* The taking away of his children by the Court of Chancery.

† I think, the *Masque of Anarchy*.

‡ *Julian and Maddalo*, printed in the Posthumous Poems. Maddalo is Lord Byron; Julian, himself.

is ideal. Strong passion expresses itself in metaphor, borrowed from objects alike remote or near, *and casts over all the shadow of its own greatness.** But what am I about? if my grandmother sucks eggs, was it I who taught her?

If *you* would really correct the proofs, I need not trouble Peacock, who, I suppose, has enough. Can you take it as a compliment that I prefer to trouble you?

I do not particularly wish this poem to be known as mine; but, at all events, I would not put my name to it. I leave you to judge whether it is best to throw it in the fire, or to publish it. So much for self—*self*, that burr that will stick to one. Your kind expressions about my Eclogue † gave me great pleasure; indeed, my great stimulus in writing, is to have the approbation of those who feel kindly towards me. The rest is mere duty. I am also delighted to hear that you think of us, and form fancies about us. We cannot yet come home.

* * * * *

Most affectionately yours,

P. B. Shelley.

LETTER III.

[*The Author's Portrait*—Rosamond Gray—*Raphael and Michael Angelo*—*The* Cenci—*Charles Ollier*—Calendar of the Months.]

Livorno, September 3rd, 1819.

My dear Friend,—At length has arrived Ollier's parcel, and with it the portrait. What a delightful present! It is almost yourself; and we sate talking with it, and of it, all the

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* Let me admire with the reader (I do not pretend to be under the necessity of calling his attention to it) this most noble image.

† *Rosalind and Helen.*

evening. . . . . It is a great pleasure to us to possess it, a pleasure in a time of need; coming to us when there are few others. How we wish it were you, and not your picture! How I wish we were with you!*

This parcel, you know, and all its letters, are now a year old; some older. There are all kinds of dates, from March to August, 1818, and "your date," to use Shakspeare's expression, "is better in a pie or a pudding, than in your letter." "Virginity," Parolles says; but letters are the same thing in another shape.

With it came, too, Lamb's works. I have looked at none of the other books yet. What a lovely thing is his *Rosamond Gray!* how much knowledge of the sweetest and deepest part of our nature is in it! When I think of such a mind as Lamb's, when I see how unnoticed remain things of such exquisite and complete perfection, what should I hope for myself, if I had not higher objects in view than fame?

I have seen too little of Italy and of pictures. Perhaps Peacock has shown you some of my letters to him. But at Rome I was very ill, seldom able to go out without a carriage; and though I kept horses for two months there, yet there is so much to see! Perhaps I attended more to sculpture than painting,—its forms being more easily intelligible than those of the latter. Yet I saw the famous works of Raphael, whom I agree with the whole world in thinking the finest painter. Why, I can tell you another time. With respect to Michael Angelo, I dissent, and think with astonishment and indignation

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* The picture was a duplicate of one in crayons by Wildman, and universally pronounced excellent. The original, unfortunately, got obliterated by being put away in a damp place, and the copy disappeared in Italy after my friend's death.

on the common notion that he equals, and in some respects exceeds Raphael. He seems to me to have no sense of moral dignity and loveliness; and the energy for which he has been so much praised, appears to me to be a certain rude, external, mechanical quality, in comparison with anything possessed by Raphael; or even much inferior artists. His famous painting in the Sixtine Chapel, seems to me deficient in beauty and majesty, both in the conception and the execution. He has been called the Dante of painting; but if we find some of the gross and strong outlines, which are employed in the few most distasteful passages of the *Inferno*, where shall we find *your* Francesca?—where, the spirit coming over the sea in a boat, like Mars rising from the vapours of the horizon?—where, Matilda gathering flowers, and all the exquisite tenderness, and sensibility, and ideal beauty, in which Dante excelled all poets except Shakspeare?

As to Michael Angelo's *Moses*—but you have seen a cast of that in England.——I write these things, Heaven knows why!

I have written something and finished it, different from anything else, and a new attempt for me; and I mean to dedicate it to you.* I should not have done so without your approbation, but I asked your picture last night, and it smiled assent. If I did not think it in some degree worthy of you, I would not make you a public offering of it. I expect to have to write to you soon about it.† If Ollier is not turned Christian, Jew, or become infected with *the Murrain*, he will publish it. Don't

---

* The *Cenci*.

† I need not say how deeply I felt the honour and glory done me by the loving dedication of my friend.

let him be frightened, for it is nothing which by any courtesy of language can be termed either moral or immoral.*

Mary has written to Marianne for a parcel, in which I beg you will make Ollier enclose what you know would most interest me,—your *Calendar* (a sweet extract from which I saw in the *Examiner*), and the other poems belonging to you; and, for some friends of mine, my *Eclogue*. This parcel, which must be sent instantly, will reach me by October; but don't trust letters to it, except just a line or so. When you write, write by the post.

Ever your affectionate

P. B. S.

My love to Marianne and Bessy, and Thornton too, and Percy,† &c.; and if you could imagine any way in which I could be useful to them here, tell me. I will inquire about the Italian chalk. You have no idea of the pleasure this portrait gives us.

LETTER IV.

[*Boccaccio—Italian Poets of the first and second order—Charles Lloyd.*]

Livorne, Sept. 27th, 1819.

My dear Friend,—We are now on the point of leaving this place for Florence, where we have taken pleasant apartments

---

* Our friend Charles Ollier was not frightened. The author of *Ferrers* and *Inesilla* has a veritable genius for fright; but he keeps it to inspire his interesting romances and masterly *diablerie*.

† His little namesake, one of my sons, now a man of three-and-thirty, and worthy of the name that was given him.

for six months, which brings us to the 1st of April; the season at which new flowers and new thoughts spring forth upon the earth and in the mind. What is then our destination is yet undecided. I have not yet seen Florence, except as one sees the outside of the streets; but its physiognomy indicates it to be a city, which, though the ghost of a republic, yet possesses most amiable qualities. I wish you could meet us there in the spring, and we would try to muster up a "lieta brigata," which, leaving behind them the pestilence of remembered misfortunes, might act over again the pleasures of the interlocutors in Boccaccio. I have been lately reading this most divine writer. He is, in the high sense of the word, a poet, and his language has the rhythm and harmony of verse. I think him not equal, certainly, either to Dante or Petrarch, but far superior to Tasso and Ariosto, the children of a later and of a colder day. I consider the three first as the productions of the vigour of the infancy of a new nation, as rivulets from the same spring as that which fed the greatness of the Republics of Florence and Pisa, and which checked the influence of the German emperors, and from which, through obscurer channels, Raphael and Michael Angelo drew the light and the harmony of their inspiration. When the second-rate poets of Italy wrote, the corrupting blight of tyranny was already hanging on every bud of genius. Energy, and simplicity, and unity of idea were no more. In vain do we seek, in the fine passages of Ariosto or Tasso, any expression which at all approaches, in this respect, to those of Dante and Petrarch. How much do I admire Boccaccio! What descriptions of nature are there in his little introductions to every new day! It is the morning of life, stripped of that mist of familiarity which makes it obscure to us. Boccaccio seems to me to have possessed a deep sense of the fair ideal of human life, considered in its social relations.

His more serious theories of love agree especially with mine. He often expresses things lightly, too, which have serious meanings of a very beautiful kind. He is a moral casuist, the opposite of the ready-made and worldly system of morals.

* * * * * *

It would give me much pleasure to know Mr. Lloyd.* When I was in Cumberland, I got Southey to borrow a copy of *Berkeley* from him, and I remember observing some pencil notes in it, probably written by Lloyd, which I thought particularly acute.

Most affectionately your friend.

P. B. S.

LETTER V.

[*Birth of a Son—Probable return to England.*]

Firenze, Dec. 2nd, 1819.

My dear Friend,—Yesterday morning Mary brought me a little boy.† She suffered but two hours' pain, and is now so well that it seems a wonder that she stays in bed. The babe is also quite well, and has begun to suck. You may imagine this is a great relief and a great comfort to me, amongst all my misfortunes, past, present, and to come.

Since I last wrote to you, some circumstances have occurred, not necessary to explain by letter, which make my pecuniary condition a very difficult one. The physicians absolutely forbid my travelling to England in the winter, but I shall probably pay you a visit in the spring. With what pleasure, among all

---

* Charles Lloyd, the translator of *Alfieri*. He was quite able to write the notes in question.

† The present Sir Percy Florence Shelley.

the other sources of regret and discomfort with which England abounds for me, do I think of looking on the original of that kind and earnest face, which is now opposite Mary's bed. It will be the only thing which Mary will envy me, or will need to envy me, in that journey; for I shall come alone. Shaking hands with you is worth all the trouble; the rest is clear loss."

I will tell you more about myself and my pursuits, in my next letter.

Kind love to Marianne, Bessy, and all the children. Poor Mary begins (for the first time) to look a little consoled. For we have spent, as you may imagine, a miserable five months. Good-bye, my dear Hunt.

Your affectionate friend,

P. B. S.

I have had no letter from you for *a month*.

LETTER VI.

[*Political State of England—Non-writing.*]

Florence, Dec. 23rd, 1819.

My dear Hunt,—*Why* don't you write to us? I was preparing to send you something for your *Indicator*, but I have been a drone instead of a bee in this business, thinking that, perhaps, as you did not acknowledge any of my late enclosures, it would not be welcome to you, whatever I might send.*

---

* Strange jest! I was, indeed, dilatory; but I was also in very bad health, and writing with difficulty. I had, however, written to him, as the reader will see.

What a state England is in! But you will never write politics. I don't wonder;—but I wish, then, that you would write a paper in the *Examiner*, on the actual state of the country, and what, under all the circumstances of the conflicting passions and interests of men, we are to expect. Not what we ought to expect, or what, if so and so were to happen, we might expect,—but what, as things are, there is reason to believe will come;—and send it me for my information. Every word a man has to say is valuable to the public now; and thus you will at once gratify your friend, nay, instruct, and either exhilarate him or force him to be resigned,—and awaken the minds of the people.

I have no spirits to write what I do not know whether you will care much about: I know well that if I were in great misery, poverty, &c. you would think of nothing else but how to amuse and relieve me. You omit me if I am prosperous.

* * * * *

I could laugh if I found a joke, in order to put you in good-humour with me after my scolding;—in good-humour enough to write to us. * * * Affectionate love to and from all. This ought not only to be the *Vale* of a letter, but a superscription over the gate of life.

Your sincere friend,

P. B. Shelley.

I send you a *sonnet*. I don't expect you to publish it, but you may show it to whom you please.

LETTER VII.

[Masque of Anarchy—*Tasso's* Amintas—Dramas of Calderon—Cyclops *of Euripides—and* Symposium *of Plato—State of England.*]

December, 1819.

My dear Friend,—Two letters, both bearing date Oct. 20, arrive on the same day:—one is always glad of twins.

We hear of a box arrived at Genoa with books and clothes; it must be yours. Meanwhile the babe is wrapped in flannel petticoats, and we get on with him as we can. He is small, healthy, and pretty. Mary is recovering rapidly. Marianne, I hope, is quite recovered.

You do not tell me whether you have received my lines on the Manchester affair. They are of the exotic species, and are meant, not for the *Indicator*, but the *Examiner*. I would send for the former, if you like, some letters on such subjects of art as suggest themselves in Italy. Perhaps I will, at a venture, send you a specimen of what I mean next post. I enclose you in this a piece for the *Examiner;* or let it share the fate, whatever that fate may be, of the *Mask of Anarchy*.

I am sorry to hear that you have employed yourself in translating *Aminta*, though I doubt not it will be a just and beautiful translation. You ought to write Amintas. You ought to exercise your fancy in the perpetual creation of new forms of gentleness and beauty.

* * * * *

With respect to translation, even I will not be seduced by it; although the Greek plays, and some of the ideal dramas of Calderon (with which I have lately, and with inexpressible wonder and delight, become acquainted), are perpetually tempting me to throw over their perfect and glowing forms

the grey veil of my own words. And you know me too well to suspect that I refrain from the belief that what I would substitute for them would deserve the regret which yours would, if suppressed. I have confidence in my moral sense alone; but that is a kind of originality. I have only translated the *Cyclops of Euripides* when I could absolutely do nothing else, and the *Symposium* of Plato, which is the delight and astonishment of all who read it;—I mean, the original, or so much of the original as is seen in my translation, not the translation itself.*

* * * * *

I think I have an accession of strength since my residence in Italy, though the disease itself in the side, whatever it may be, is not subdued. Some day we shall all return from Italy. I fear that in England things will be carried violently by the rulers, and that they will not have learned to yield in time to the spirit of the age. The great thing to do is to hold the balance between popular impatience and tyrannical obstinacy; to inculcate with fervour both the right of resistance and the duty of forbearance. You know, my principles incite me to take all the good I can get in politics, for ever aspiring to something more. I am one of those whom nothing will fully satisfy, but who am ready to be partially satisfied by all that is practicable. We shall see.†

Give Bessy a thousand thanks from me for writing out, in that pretty neat hand, your kind and powerful defence. Ask

---

* The translation is worthy of the original.

† Shelley would have been pleased to see the change that took place under the administration of Canning,—a change, which is here described by anticipation. He would have been still more pleased to see what is doing every day, by wise degrees, under Lord John Russell.

what she would like best from Italian land. We mean to bring you all something; and Mary and I have been wondering what it shall be. Do you, each of you, choose.

* * * * *

Adieu, my dear friend,

Yours, affectionately ever,

P. B. S.

LETTER VIII.

[*Visit to Lord Byron—His Lordship's proposal to set up a periodical work—Horace Smith*—Adonais—Prometheus Unbound—Cenci—*Sentiments of Lord Byron.*

Pisa, August 26th, 1821.

My dearest Friend,—Since I last wrote to you, I have been on a visit to Lord Byron at Ravenna. The result of this visit was a determination on his part to come and live at Pisa, and I have taken the finest palace on the Lung' Arno for him. But the material part of my visit consists in a message which he desires me to give you, and which I think ought to add to your determination—for such a one I hope you have formed—of restoring your shattered health and spirits by a migration to these "regions mild of calm and serene air."

He proposes that you should come and go shares with him and me, in a periodical work, to be conducted here; in which each of the contracting parties should publish all their original compositions, and share the profits. He proposed it to Moore, but for some reason it was never brought to bear. There can be no doubt that the *profits* of any scheme in which you and Lord Byron engage, must, from various yet co-operating reasons, be very great. As to myself, I am, for the present,

only a sort of link between you and him, until you can know each other and effectuate the arrangement; since (to entrust you with a secret which, for your sake, I withhold from Lord Byron) nothing would induce me to share in the profits, and still less in the borrowed splendour, of such a partnership.* You and he, in different manners, would be equal, and would bring, in a different manner, but in the same proportion, equal stocks of reputation and success: do not let my frankness with you, nor my belief that you deserve it more than Lord Byron, have the effect of deterring you from assuming a station in modern literature, which the universal voice of my contemporaries forbids me either to stoop or aspire to. I am, and I desire to be, nothing.

I did not ask Lord Byron to assist me in sending a remittance for your journey; because there are men, however excellent, from whom we would never receive an obligation in the worldly sense of the word; and I am as jealous for my friend as for myself. I, as you know, have it not: but I suppose that at last I shall make up an impudent face, and ask Horace Smith to add to the many obligations he has conferred on me. I know I need only ask.

I think I have never told you how very much I like your *Amintas*: it almost reconciles me to translations. In another sense, I still demur. You might have written another such poem as the *Nymphs*, with no great access of effort. I am full of thoughts and plans, and should do something if the feeble and irritable frame which incloses it was willing to obey the spirit. I fancy that then I should do great things. Before

* Shelley afterwards altered his mind; but he had a reserved intention underneath it, which he would have endeavoured to put in practice, had his friend allowed him.

this you will have seen *Adonais*. Lord Byron, I suppose from modesty on account of his being mentioned in it, did not say a word of *Adonais*, though he was loud in his praise of *Prometheus*: and, what you will not agree with him in, censure of the *Cenci*. Certainly, if *Marino Faliero* is a drama, the *Cenci* is not: but that between ourselves. Lord Byron is reformed, as far as gallantry goes, and lives with a beautiful and sentimental Italian lady, who is as much attached to him as may be. I trust greatly to his intercourse with you, for his creed to become as pure as he thinks his conduct is. He has many generous and exalted qualities, but the canker of aristocracy wants to be cut out.

* * * * *

THE END.

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* Owing to an accident of haste at the moment, the following remarks were omitted after the words "to rule him," in vol. iii. p. 256. "I know not how far a manly delight might not rather have invited than feared a representation so long a standing, and of such great popularity, as Douglas Jerrold's; but it is to be doubted whether even Douglas Jerrold, with all his popularity, and all his wit to boot, would have found the doors of a theatre opened to him with so much readiness, had he not been a journalist, and one of the leaders in Punch.

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* Owing to the omission of a letter to a public journal, which I feared might seem ill-timed and superfluous, the present work does not contain, as I intended it should, a passage in which I had expressed my opinion of the great qualities of this patriot. I therefore insert it here, till occasion may enable me to incorporate it with the text. I differ with Mazzini inasmuch as I prefer a limited monarchy to a republic without one; and I am for doing all things with the pen, and peace with the sword. I consider him one of the truest and noblest of men. His writings have given me this impression, and everything related of him by those who have conversed with him confirms it. I look upon him as one who "does daily" for the sake of principle, and I earnestly wish he may not become a martyr to it.

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